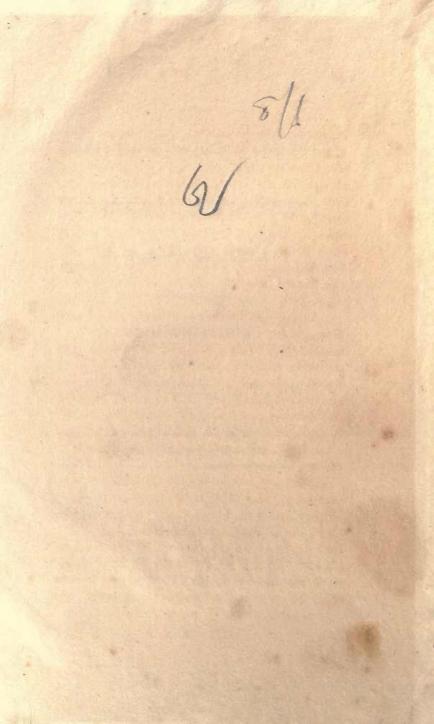


THERE are different opinions respecting the object of our Saviour's Mission, some persons supposing it to have been principally confined to his declaring to mankind the Will of the Almighty respecting their duty and expectations, and of setting an example of resignation and patience; while others think it must have extended much further than that; his short abode upon earth, and more particularly, the brief period of his ministry, appear to be irreconcileable with the first of these views of the subject.

I believe our Saviour to have been a created Being, highly endowed with wisdom and power by his Almighty Father, and that he was sent into the world to benefit mankind; that he became a Sacrifice, and suffered death upon the cross, and rose from the dead, and is become our Mediator and Advocate; and that by supplicating the Almighty in his name, we shall, through the efficacy of his death, find acceptance, and obtain pardon of our sins upon repentance.

The subject thus considered will admit of those expressions being brought into it, such as Christ having died for us, of our being reconciled by his blood, and all similar passages, with as great propriety as they are generally applied by those who advocate a vicarious satisfaction, inasmuch as his blood was shed that he might be enabled to enter upon his office as our Mediator and Judge, and give us access to the Throne of Grace and Mercy.



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# LETTERS

## A PROTESTANT DIVINE,

In defence of Circularianism;

By appealer BARRISTER

SECOND EDITION

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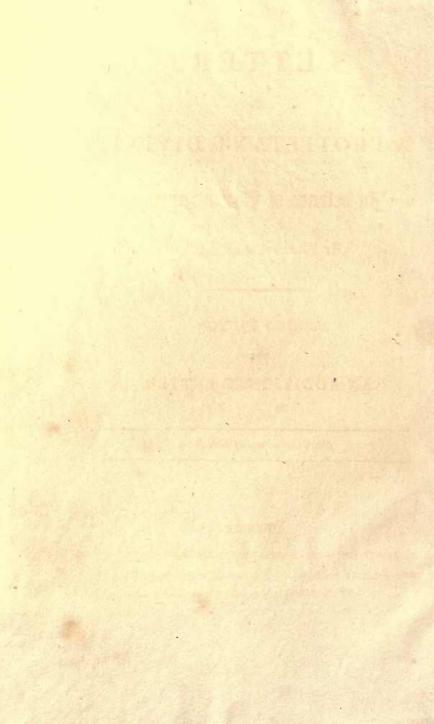
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#### London:

PRINTED BY RICHARD AND ARTHUR TAYLOR, SHOE-LANE:
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### PREFACE.

THE following Letters constitute the author's part of a real and amicable correspondence, which took place between himself and his friend, to whom they were addressed, in consequence of a remark accidentally made in conversation, that the words of our Saviour (John x. 30), "I and my Father are one," prove the trinitarian doctrine of his equality with the Father, which the author denied, and maintained that the whole of the dialogue between our blessed Lord, and the Jews, of which this text forms a part, taken together, proves the contrary. They were written without any intention of publishing them; but having been shewn to another friend of the author, -of whose judgment he has a very high opinion, and to

whom the world is indebted for several most valuable theological works, -for him to see, whether the author, who has not been accustomed to controversies of this description, had made any material mistake, or mistatement, which ought to be candidly acknowledged, and retracted, he recommended their being made public, as likely to promote the interests of religious truth. If it be probable that this effect will result from their publication, in however small a degree, the author knows it to be his duty, to lay them before the public; and has therefore determined to commit them to the press, trusting that reasonable allowance will be made for his not being a theologian by profession.

He has designated himself only by the profession to which he belongs, his arguments, and not his name, being all that the public are concerned with: and he has called himself, another Barrister, merely to distinguish himself from an ingenious member of the same profession, who some years since published many valuable letters on various religious subjects.

Having occasionally made use of the word sect, in the course of the following letters, he

begs leave to disclaim having ever adopted it in the confined, and illiberal, sense of it, which renders it a term of reproach. He well knows, that in this sense, all the members of every church, of which the Christian world is composed, may be considered by turns to be sectarians by the narrow-minded and bigoted individuals of other churches. In this sense a member of the Church of England will be deemed a sectarian the moment he sets his foot on the north bank of the Tweed, as will any member of the Church of Scotland, whom he may bring back with him, as soon as he reaches the opposite bank of the same river: and should they chance to travel further together, and cross the Channel, on landing upon its southern shore, they would both be denominated sectarians by our Roman Catholic neighbours. Here if they were to associate to themselves some honest Frenchman, and take a longer journey to the north, inclining somewhat to the east, they would arrive in a Christian country, in which they might travel seven thousand miles, and be all three considered sectarians, during the whole of their progress. The author has therefore invariably used the word in its more enlarged, and as he conceives, correct,

sense, in which all the Churches of Christendom, whether differing in doctrine, or form of church government, whether national, or otherwise, are sects, or divisions, constituting altogether, the truly catholic, or universal church of Christ.

He wishes it also to be understood, that he considers Unitarianism, as such, to have nothing to do with any particular form of church government. Different nations, and individuals, always have, and perhaps ever will, entertain different opinions upon this subject, and the Unitarian, like the rest of his fellow Christians, will of course determine for himself.

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#### ADVERTISEMENT

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#### SECOND EDITION.

The author avails himself of the opportunity afforded him by the publication of a second edition of his two first Letters, to submit to the consideration of the Public an additional Letter, written in answer to a third received from his friend. It will shew the present state of the controversy, and enable the reader to judge how far the author has succeeded in the explanation of many very important passages of Scripture which bear most strongly upon the questions in difference between the Unitarians and Trinitarians.

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Difficulties attending it, differences in the manuscripts and different translations. Reasons for not translating it as in the common version. No doctrinal point to be established upon such a basis; much less so stupendous and improbable an one, that a person who appeared as a man in every respect, was the Supreme Being, especially when there is another translation obvious, easy, and unattended with any such difficulty. p. 127 .- It is not correct to say, that the Jews never used the term a God, but by way of reproach.' Proofs from Scripture, that they used it otherwise, applying it in its inferior sense to prophets, judges, rulers, priests, and angels. p. 129.—The Gods of the Egyptians not alluded to in the 7th chap, of Exod, p. 131 .- Reply to the observation that the Jews considered the name of Jehovah as incommunicable, and that passages spoken of Jehovah in the Old Testament are applied to Christ by the apostles in the New, showing the superstition of the Jews about the name Jehovah, which they did not draw from their Scriptures, thus shewing it not only to have been communicable, but to have been actually communicated to persons, places, and things, and why. p. 132.—Instances of this from the Old Testament. p. 133.—Supposing Joshua to have been a type of Christ, as its communication to the type does not prove him to have been more than man, neither does its communication to the antitype prove any thing more. p. 134.-It was never intended to identify the persons, places, or things, to which it was communicated with Jehovah himself. p. 135 .-Difficult for Trinitarians to give up their preconceived opinions upon this subject. p. 136.—Jer, xxiii. 6, 7, and Is. xlv. 24, 25, respecting 'the Lord our righteousness,' and,' in Jehovah have we righteousness,' furnish no proof of our Lord being Jehovah, supposing the first prophecy to apply to him, the same things being affirmed of different persons, sometimes in the same sense, and sometimes in different senses, illustrated by 1 Chron. xxix. 20. Exod. xiv. 31. Id. xx. 2, Id. xxxii, 7, and xxxiii. 1. Deut. v. 6. 1 Sam. ii. 12. The same as to John the Baptist going before Jehovah, and also going before Christ.-The argument that persons must be the same, because the same things are affirmed of them, would be held wretched reasoning for any other purpose than to prove the Trinity. Effect of similar reasoning in astronomy. p. 138.-Further remarks on Jer. xxiii, 6, 7, and Is, xlv. 24, illustrated by Jer. xxxiii, 15, and 2 Cor. v. 19. shewing that Jehovah and Christ are different persons. p. 140. -The Divine produces no proofs of his assertion, that passages spoken of Jehovah in the Old Testament are without scruple applied to Christ in the New: nor does he invalidate the author's former arguments against his assertion. that every divine name, title, attribute, &c. is ascribed to Christ in the Scriptures, shewing that some of the most important are not only never ascribed to him, but upon his own authority do not exist in him; notwithstanding which, he repeats the same assertion with as little ceremony as at first. p. 142,-As names and titles seem to be still relied upon, an additional list is furnished of names given to a variety of persons, from which it might be proved, that each of them was God, and possessed of divine attributes, precisely as the Divine proposes to prove from the ascription of such names to Christ, that he the court all a section to be a section

is God. p. 144.—The names given to different persons, calling them Jehovah and God, and seemingly ascribing to them his divine attributes, many of them as high and lofty as any given to our Saviour, shew that all of them together, if all had been conferred upon him, would not have proved him to have been really Jehovah. p. 145 .- The title Harrozearue never given to our Lord, but to the Father only, and the fathers of the three first centuries considered it as his peculiar and exclusive designation. p. 146.-Answer to the observation, that our Lord speaks of himself in such terms, as brought upon him alone, of all the inspired messengers of Heaven, the charge of blasphemy for making himself equal with God. Nothing shews the weakness of the Trinitarian cause so much, as endeavouring to prove what our Lord is, by the charges of his enemies against him. p. 146.—He was as free from the charges made against him by the Jews, as from the Trinitarian sentiments imputed to him in subsequent times by his own mistaken followers. He never claimed, however, equality with God, nor did the Jews charge him with it, but only with justifying his violation of the Sabbath by the example of God; in that respect making himself like God: but if the Jews had designed to impute the former to him, his reply, acknowledging the most marked inferiority, shews it to have been a false charge. p. 147. - Observations on John v. 20.-Explanation of the meaning of all things which the Father doeth, and which he shewed to the Son, exemplified by 1 John ii. 20, must be limited, for be was to be shewed greater works than these. What these greater works were, stated by our Lord in terms strongly expressive of inferiority and subjection; acknowledging that the future judgment had been committed to him, and therefore that the authority was not originally his own; that he was to be honoured as the Father was honoured, only because this authority was committed to him. p. 148.—He states that his baving life in himself, and having anthority to execute judgment, were his Father's gifts, consequently they might have been withheld; that this authority was not given to him because he was the divine Logos, but because he was the son of man, adding, that of himself he could do nothing. John v. 30. p. 150 .- Plain, that if the Jews meant to impute to him the making of himself equal with God, the charge was a false charge, and his answer a complete refutation of it. What it more probably was, p. 151.-What he represented himself to be, not to be proved by the charges made against him by false accusers, who were his enemies, but by what he said of himself .- In John x. 33, they did charge him with blasphemy, for making himself God, or a God; but there also it appears to have been a false charge, and would not have amounted to blasphemy had it been true. Had these false accusations even proceeded wholly from ignorance, we are not to take the ignorant for our instructors. Our Lord's opinion of them and their leaders. p. 153.-The law of blasphemy, as understood by the Jews, of a very undefined character. Not necessary for a man to make bimself God, or to speak against God, to incur it; nor was our Lord the only inspired messenger who did incur it. p. 154 .- It is admitted, that to understand the evangelists and apostles, we should consider them as men full of

Old Testament ideas. In the Old Testament, however, we find every where clear, plain, and numerous declarations of the divine unity, but not a syllable about the Trinity. Enumeration of passages, in which Old Testament ideas concerning the nature of the Supreme Being are conveyed; such as "Hear, O Israel! Jehovah thy God is one Jehovah," &c. p. 154.-Such are the declarations of the Supreme Being, the Great Jehovah himself, clearly and repeatedly inculcating the divine unity; and such are the Old Testament ideas, of which the evangelists and apostles must have been full, and not of Trinitarian ideas, which are no where to be found in the Old Testament. Those are some of the most important things, which God spoke to the Jewish fathers by the prophets; and as the apostle informs us, Heb. i. 1, 2, that it was the FATHER who spoke to them by the prophets, this excludes the Son and the Holy Spirit. It appears, that he, the Supreme FATHER, has declared, that he is one Jehovah, that he is God, that there is none else beside him, that besides him there is no Saviour, that there is none like him, none equal to him, none to be compared to him; whilst the Trinitarians must contend, that there are two others like him and equal to him; that there are two other persons who are God beside him; that there is another Saviour beside him, who is more strictly a saviour than himself. p. 157. Unfortunately for the Trinitarian cause, these are ideas no more to be found in the New Testament, than in the Old. p. 158 .- The Divine appears to shrink from further reference to the Greek Fathers, on finding their evidence unfavourable. Being his witnesses, however, the author puts some questions to them by way of cross-examination, and means to propose more. p. 158 .-But the reason why Ocos is anarthrous in John i. 1. is not because the Greeks thus expressed the predicate of a proposition, in distinction from the subject which has the article, p. 159.-The evangelist knew of no such rule, having only three verses lower written as an utter stranger to, and directly contrary to it, if any such existed, John i. 4,-He had another and a better reason. He did not make the distinction without a difference. He knew full well, when he wrote the first chapter, that our Lord himself had made the distinction in the discourse, which he has recorded in his 10th chap, and followed his example. p. 160.-This supposed rule unknown also to St. Paul, 1 Cor. xi.3, and to the author of the book of Revelations. Rev. xix. 10; also to Eusebius. who says, that the apostle might have prefix d the article to Gos, as well as Ois, if he had thought the Father and the Son to be one and the same, and the Son to be God over all. p. 161.—Origen expresses similar sentiments. p. 163.-Doing this would not have made it an identical proposition, for the terms of the subject and predicate would have differed. Trinitarianism not to be benefited by appealing to the rules of logic. p. 163.—Texts quoted by the Divine to shew that & 9105 is applied to Christ, namely, John xx. 28. Heb. 1.8. Rom, ix. 5, 2 Pet. i. 1, Tit. ii. 13, and iii. 4. The author had only said in his former Letter, that he did not know where & Sees was applied to Christ. He still does not, the texts quoted by the Divine not proving it. In consequence of further investigation, he thinks himself entitled to say, that & 9005 used absolutely

and without any qualification, is never applied to Christ, or any other person than the Father. p. 164. - Examination of John xx. 28, "O my Lord, and O my God;" which is shewn not to answer the purpose it is cited for. p. 166 .-Even laying the qualification out of the case, it would be no authority for the application of & Sug to Christ. Reasons for believing & Sug in this text to be in the vocative, and 900 to be used in the inferior sense, p. 168.—Eminent critics have considered the passage to be a sudden exclamation, the former part of which only was addressed to Christ, and the latter to the Father. Instance of a transition still more abrupt, 1 Sam. xx. 12. p. 169,-Examination of Heb. i. 8. in the common version, "Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever." This text still more unfit for the Divine's purpose than the former. Different interpretations of it. Parallel passage from Ps. lxxiii. 26. p. 170.—Examination of Rom. ix. 5, in the common version, "of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, who is God over all, blessed for ever." This text still more exceptionable than either of the former, and why. Opinions of eminent critics, and quotations from the Fathers. p. 172,-Examination of Titus ii. 13, "Looking for the blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ:" and 2 Pet. i. 1. "Through the righteousness of God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ." Both these texts fall short of the point in question, and why. Ambiguous passages to be construed by plain ones, and not obscura per obscuriora. The Scriptures not to be treated less fairly and rationally than other writings, p. 174,-Mr. Sharp and Dr. Middleton's system relative to the Greek article considered. Not at all to be depended upon; and if it were, these texts might be classed among the exceptions, p. 176.—Another test applied to their rules, namely, the writings of the fathers. Origen, Eusebius, and Clemens Alexandrinus, could have known nothing of them. p. 178.-Further remarks on 2 Pet, i. 1. p. 179 .- Examination of Tit. iii. 4, "But after that the kindness and love of our Saviour God towards mankind appeared." The article not prefixed to Gos, and the words 'God our Saviour' are spoken of the Father, as contradistinguished from the Son. Reasons why calling God our Saviour and Jesus Christ our Saviour is no proof of identity. p. 180 .- The Divine has failed in every text he has produced as proof of & Sees being applied to Christ. p. 182.—The author has no difficulty where to find his proofs of & See being applied to the Father; but has to select a few, out of multitudes, in every part of Scripture. 1 John iv. 6-16. furnishes a complete constellation of them, containing twenty-one clear, distinct, and undisputed instances in eleven verses, of the term being applied to the Father, and what is more, as contradistinguished from Christ. The author also cites John iii. 16, 17, 34, Acts ii. 22, 1d, 32, 33, 1d, iii. 26, Rom. v. 10, Rom. viii. 3, 31, 32, p. 183,-He challenges the Divine to produce a single instance where this term has ever been clearly, unequivocally, and absolutely, applied to the Son, as in those just quoted it is to the Father. p. 186.—The strongest part of the anthor's argument on the 10th chapter of John not touched, but left entirely unanswered, the Divine having confined himself to a subordinate and collateral

point, p. 187 .- The Divine's objections to the author's remarks on the sanctification of the Son by the Father, John x. 36, that it signifies 'setting apart to a peculiar use.' Answer, that this must mean either a consecration to such use, or a separation from other persons or things for such uses; the first of which is shewn to be inconsistent with the Trinitarian hypothesis, and the second impossible; whilst upon Unitarian principles neither the one nor the other occasions any difficulty at all. p. 188 .- That the apostles do not apply to Jesus Christ what Isaiah says, 'Sanctify the Lord of Hosts, and he shall be a stumbling block to both houses of Israel.' No ground for the inference that Christ is the Lord of Hosts. Examination of Is. viii. 13, Id. xxviii. 16, Ps. Ixix. 22. Rom. ix. 23, 1 Pet. ii. 5-8.— Sanctifying' used by Isaiah in the sense of honouring or glorifying, in which it is used also Numb. xx. 12, Lev. x. 3. p. 190.-The same subject continued. Absurdity of concluding, if the Lord of Hosts had been called a stumbling block, and our Saviour also a stumbling block, that therefore they must have been one and the same, exemplified by applying the same rule to astronomy. p. 192.-Proof from Rom. ix. 33, Rev. ii. 14, that the Jews had other stumbling blocks. p. 194. The apostle Paul, if he had designed, Rom. ix. 31, 32, to represent Christ as the stumbling stone that was laid, designed to represent him as different from the Lord of Hosts who laid it. p.195 .- If the apostle Peter, 1 Pet. ii. 6, considered Christ to be the stone he mentions, nothing more follows, than that Isaiah had said that the Lord of Hosts should be for a stone of stumbling to both houses of Israel: and the apostle Peter says, that Christ had become a stone of stumbling, which each might have been, the one under the old and the other under the new dispensation, without their being the same. In fact, the apostles say nothing about the Lord of Hosts, p. 195 .- The Divine states, that our Lord stooped from a state of original dignity and glory, and placed himself in a state of inferior condition to the Father, which accounts for his saving 'the Father,' who never thus stooped, 'is greater than I.' The author denies that there is any proof of this in the Scriptures. p. 197 .- These words of our Lord declare him to be then inferior, and there is no allusion to any antecedent or original dignity, much less equality. p. 199 .- The words prove, that the Father was greater than our Lord, taking him as he then was, being, upon the Trinitarian hypothesis, a person consisting of a divine nature equal to the Father, and a human nature which must have made him something more. Inconsistency of this shewn. p. 199 .- Still to be proved that he was ever equal to the Father in any relation, p. 200.—The Scriptures nowhere declare that our Lord had any original or underived glory. His own declarations prove the contrary. John v. 19, 22, 26, 27, 30, Id. vii. 16, Id. xii. 49. ld. xiv. 10, p. 201;-No proof furnished by John xvii. 5, that our Lord had original glory, or even that he preexisted. Construction of the Greek word gapa. p. 202. - His glory not actually enjoyed before the world was, but existed in the contemplation and counsel of God, proved by John viii. 56, Rom. iv. 17, Gen. xvii. 5, Rev. xiii. 8, Luke xx. 38, John xvii. 12, p. 203 .-The passage Philipp, ii. quoted in favour of Trinitarianism, gives St. Paul's

account of the state from which our Lord stooped, and will, if the author is not mistaken, turn out upon examination to be decidedly hostile to that system. The Greek text shews at the first glance, that it will admit of other interpretations, at least equal, and in the author's judgment much superior, to that of the common version. p. 204.-First translation, supposing the interpretation in the common version "thought it not robbery to be equal to," to be correct, but rendering 9 sos without the article, when applied to Christ, a God. The moment the Father is introduced, he is at once called & Oses. p. 205 .-Reasons for, and advantages of, thus rendering Oses without the article, p. 207. -Meaning of being in the form of a God, considering the latter word to be used in its inferior sense according to our Lord's own interpretation of it. The apostle obviously considered him to have stooped from the state of a prophet endued with miraculous powers, to that of a slave. p. 208. - Objections to the rendering of "thought it not robbery to be equal to." p. 209.—Preferable rendering of appayuss, a prey, and isa, like. p. 209.—Makes the passage consistent, and our Lord a pattern of perfect humility throughout. In what manner he divested himself of the form of a God, and took upon him that of a slave, p. 210.—That it was voluntary on his part, and why. p. 211.—How he might, according to his own account, have delivered himself. p. 212 .- No allusion in this passage to a preexistent state, the whole relating to our Lord's voluntary humiliation when he delivered himself up. p. 212 .- Absurd consequences of supposing that he humbled himself when in a preexistent state of glory equal to that of the Father. The apostle appears to have had no idea of it, nor of two natures in our Lord. p. 213 .- Other translations, instead of "thought it not robbery to be equal to God." p. 214.—The rendering of ion Θιω, by like God, or as God, exemplified by Job xi. 12, Id. xl. 15, Sept. and vindicated from objections. p. 215 .- Rendering of hysquas in the sense of imaginor, which makes the passage 'did not imagine, or think of the robbery to be equal to God.' Novatian seems to have understood the corresponding Latin words in this sense. Quotation of the passage in which he says also, that the Son never compared himself with the Father, and of another in which he proves the Son to be less than the Father, by his receiving sanctification from him. p. 217 .- This a remarkable instance of a Trinitarian, when the Trinity was not supposed to consist of three equal persons, quoting this very passage, to prove the Son's inferiority. p. 218,-Other proofs from Origen of the passage being understood in ancient times in a sense the very opposite to that supposed by modern Trinitarians. p. 219.—Proof of Eusebius having so understood it. p. 220, -and Hilary in a sense nearly similar. p. 221 .- Instances of the corresponding Latin phrase having retained the true sense of the Greek, in times long subsequent. p. 221.—A text admitting of so many different interpretations. unfit to be quoted as an authority, particularly as the Trinitarian interpretation disturbs the sense, and contradicts the general scope of the writer, and there are others perfectly rational and consistent, p. 222 .- Have any other writings received such treatment as the Christian Scriptures from their Trinitarian friends? p. 223.—There have been Trinitarians, however, who have under-

stood the passage in a different sense. p. 223.—It says nothing of any original glory of our Lord, nor of his having received a new and peculiar glory in a new nature. p. 224.—Remarks on 1 Cor. xv. 24-28.—Objection that the Son being to give up his kingdom, and to be subject, implies that he is not subject now. p. 224.—Answer, that this is mere inference, which if it arises may always be rebutted; that the apostle has taken care that it shall not arise; that he is now a delegated king under the supreme sovereignty of the Father; that when he has delivered up his kingdom, he will instead of a king be merely a subject of the Father, illustrated by Matt, xx. 20-23. p. 225.-The Divine's description of the Father as holding in the scheme of redemption the office of guardian of the rights of government in the universe, wholly unscriptural, as is that of Christ's giving up the kingdom, by giving in an account of his administration; and also the Trinitarian notion, that when he shall have delivered up his kingdom, the government of God, whether as Father, Son, or Holy Spirit, shall be all in all. p. 227 .- This not the language of the evangelists and apostles, but the contrary. 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Fourth from Acts xix. 1-5. p. 252.—The time arrived when such baptisms came to be considered invalid; but this was not in the days of the apostles or their contemporaries; on the contrary, whole bodies of Christians appear to have been baptized by them in the name of Christ, whilst not a single instance can be produced of any of them baptizing in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. p. 252 .- It would have been sufficient to have shewn that there are objections to the passage sufficient to prevent it from being pronounced to be indubitably genuine, to have made us hesitate to receive it as proof of a doctrine which requires the highest degree of certainty to establish it. p. 252.-Supposing it, however, to be unquestionably authentic, it is incapable of proving the doctrine of the Trinity. Whatever may be meant by the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, it does not declare the two latter to be God, or that all three are God, or that they are all equal, or all subsist in the same substance. p. 253.—That the baptizing into, or into the name of, a person, means the same thing, and does not prove him to be God. Rom. vi. 3, Gal. iii. 27, Acts ii. 38, Acts x. 48, Id. viii. 16, Id. xix. 1-5, and Ps. xx. 1, 7. p. 254.—Israelites baptized into Moses, and into the baptism of John, p. 255, -Baptism into the death of Christ, p. 256, -Baptism into a

person or thing, means an avowal of belief in that person or thing. So understood by many moderns, and by Hilary. p. 257.-Baptizing, therefore, into the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, no more proves the two latter to be God, than the same thing proves Moses and John to be God. p. 258 .-The joining of two or more persons in a form or ceremony, does not prove them to be one, or equal, or, that if one is God, the others are. Exod. xiv. 31, 1 Sam. xii. 18, 1 Chron. xxix. 20, 1 Tim. v. 21. p. 258.—That baptism into the name, in the singular, and not names of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, carries it no further. Luke ix. 26. p. 260.—That they had no name common to them all in Scripture. The name Trinity not to be found there. p. 261 .-Joining the Holy Spirit, supposing it to be a power, with the Father and Son, considering it as professing a belief in the existence of such power, not calculated to mislead, nor is there any impropriety in joining a mere power with a person. If the Holy Spirit was a person, John was guilty of a similar impropriety, Matt. iii. 2: and according to the Trinitarian mode of reasoning, both the Holy Spirit and Fire might be proved to be persons, or both mere qualities or powers, p. 262.—No instance to be found of the apostles imploring benediction from three. p. 264.—Consideration of 2 Cor. xiii. 4, as it affects this question. p. 264.-Mr. Yates's reason for regarding it as adverse to the doctrine of the Trinity. p. 265.-Remarks on Rev. i. 4, as adduced for the same purpose. Is one of the strongest texts to shew the absurdity of concluding, because persons are mentioned together, they must be one, or equal, or each God if one is. p. 266,-It is incredible that the writer of this book should have often ascribed glory and praise to the Father and Son, and never to the Holy Spirit, if he had thought it a person, and equally entitled to them as either of them. p. 266.-Not conceivable how the unity, equality, or godhead of persons can be proved by our being commanded to reverence and obey them. p. 268.-Nothing like proof advanced of the Holy Spirit being a person, or equal to the Father. Reason why, if it were a person, it could not be omniscient, omnipotent, or a proper object of religious worship. p. 269.-Passage in which Lucian is supposed to have ridiculed the Christians for making three one and one three, as early as the reign of Trajan. p. 270. -Had Lucian been the author of it, there would have been no reason for believing that its object was to ridicule the Christians, that is the body of Christians, or that they then held the doctrine of the Trinity. p. 270. - But the Philopatris, in which it occurs, was not written by Lucian, nor till long after his time, when the doctrine of the Trinity had made some progress, by some unknown author. p. 272.—But by whomsoever written, it has some awkward features for a modern Trinitarian to deal with. p. 273.—Passage from Tertullian, proving that the doctrine of the Trinity was not held by the majority of Christians in his time, namely, half a century at least later than Lucian. p. 274.—Passages from Origen, who flourished somewhat later than Tertullian, shewing that the same state of things continued in his time, and confirming what has been considered the meaning of Tertullian. p. 276 .-Curious caution of these writers, and to what causes to be ascribed. p. 279.

The great body of Christians in those days shocked at any thing inconsistent with the monarchy of the Father; for which reason their refined speculations were not calculated for the public ear, but were reserved for those who had been privately initiated, p. 281.-How the doctrine of the Trinity gradually became predominant, after which there was no more caution on the part of its advocates, but they persecuted their opponents without mercy. p. 281.-Testimony of the fathers of great weight upon matters of fact, particularly if militating against their particular opinions, which, shocking as they then appeared to the great body of Christians, were much less so than those which succeeded them, their Trinity consisting of three unequal persons, of whom the Father was supreme. p. 282 .- We have therefore the joint testimony of them and of the great body of Christians, 1st, that the Trinity was not then the belief of the Christians; and 2dly, that such a Trinity as is now believed, was not the belief of themselves, the learned and philosophical Christians; in opposition to which, the passage in question, even if written by Lucian, would have been of no value, but, considered as written by no one knows whom, or when, or where, sinks into complete insignificance. p. 283.-What such proofs resemble, p. 283.-Conclusion, p. 284.

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edder of them, p. 100.— Moreonary the construction of present of present cases by the provention of present cases by the provention of present of the provention of the proven

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# LETTER I.

My DEAR SIR, I mostly allowed decided to boil size your

My being at present so near to you, brings again to my recollection that I ought to return you many thanks for the letter you did me the favour to write to me about a year ago, which I have often intended to answer, but have been involved in such a variety of business as to have scarcely had sufficient time left even for the most necessary correspondence.

I feel much indebted to you for the kind concern you express at my having fallen into what appear to you to be dangerous errors, upon some subjects connected with our common religion as Christians; alluding to the sentiments I expressed relative to the nature of Christ, when I had last the pleasure of your company in Town; and particularly to my quoting the passage from the beginning of the thirtieth to the end of the thirty-sixth verse of the tenth chapter of St. Johnwhich has been frequently cited in favour of the Tri-

nitarian hypothesis—as furnishing in my judgement strong evidence of the contrary doctrine. In this passage our Saviour-having previously stated that he had power to lay down his life, and take it again; that he had received this commandment from his Father; that the works he did in his Father's name bore witness of him; that his Father who had given his sheep to him was greater than all, and that no one was able to pluck them out of his Father's hand-says, "I and my Father are one," ( $\varepsilon_{\nu}$ ) in the neuter gender in the original, meaning one thing, or one and the same thing; and noteis, meaning one God or one person. Upon this the Jews-who are frequently represented as either misconceiving our Saviour's meaning from gross ignorance, or as designedly misrepresenting it took up stones to stone him: upon which he says, "Many good works have I shewed you from my Father; for which of those works do ye stone me?" To which the Jews reply, "For a good work we stone thee not, but for blasphemy; and because that thou, being a man, makest thyself God" (in the original geov, God, or a god). Our Saviour answers, "Is it not written in your law, I said, Ye are gods? If he called them gods, to whom the word of God came, and the Scripture cannot be broken; say ye of him, whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest; because I said I am the Son of God?" From this last answer I stated, that it appeared to me to be manifestly our Saviour's meaning-If I had called myself God, or a god, I

should have been justified by your own Scriptures, in which those prophets and holy men of old, to whom the word of God came, are called gods. But I did no such thing; I only said that I was the son of God;—and do you charge me with blasphemy for this?

In the letter you were so good as to send me, you state, that the word of God which came to the prophets of old was the Eternal Logos, meaning the second person in the Trinity, i. e. our Saviour himself. But there appear to me to be most weighty objections to this opinion-which by the way is opinion only: for if we refer to the first verse of the first chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews, in order to ascertain who it was, that spoke by the prophets in times of old, before the advent of our Saviour, -and I would rather interpret Scripture by Scripture, than trust to the interpretations of all the councils that were ever convened, or the emperors and popes who assembled them, and sometimes by force, and sometimes by fraud, influenced their decisions,—we shall find that it was God the Father, and not the Son, that spoke to the fathers by the prophets: for it is there declared, that God who spoke to them by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken to us by his Son. Hence it is plain that Jesus Christ is represented as the Son of that God, who spoke to the fathers by the prophets. If therefore that God, who spoke to the fathers by the prophets, was the second person in the Trinity, the Eternal Logos, and Jesus Christ be God, there must be a quaternity (if I may use such an expression) instead of a Trinity.

It appears strange to me, that the word of any being should, because personified in figurative language, at last be supposed to designate one person, whilst the Being whose word it was, was considered to be another. In the fourth chapter of the first book of Samuel, ver. 1, are the words, "And the word of Samuel came to all Israel," which is a parallel expression to that alluded to. But it seems to me, that it would be most absurd to conclude, that Samuel was one person, and his logos (or word) another person.

Independently of the decisions of popes and councils, I should understand 'the word of God came to a person' to mean, that his command, or precept, or some revelation of his will, was communicated to that person, and nothing more. This appears to me to be a plain and rational interpretation, such as the words not only warrant, but evidently require; and therefore there seems to me to be no reason why we should travel out of the record in quest of another. Though I consider it to be clear from our Saviour's answer, that the Jews had totally misapprehended his meaning, or wilfully misrepresented it in the passage in question; no stress whatever could have been laid upon their using the word 'blasphemy,' had they understood him to mean, as he states he did, that he was the Son of God; it being apparent according to Scripture phraseology, that blasphemy might not only be spoken of God, and of his holy prophets and messengers; but also of kings and other persons in high stations. Thus in the twenty-first chapter of the first book

of Kings, ver. 13, "And there came in two men, children of Belial, and sat before him: and the men of Belial witnessed against him, even against Naboth, in the presence of the people, saying, Naboth did blaspheme God and the king." This was a public accusation before all the people, and consequently it is evident that it was well understood, not only by the men of Belial but by all the people, that blasphemy might be spoken not only of God, but of the king also; and that the word was at that time used merely in the sense of speaking evil of God or of any exalted persons among men, whatever notions we in modern times have been accustomed to annex to it.

If we are content to interpret Scripture by Scripture, and will admit that we cannot have a better guide than our Saviour himself, as to what he means by the expression of 'he and his Father being one' ( \$\varphi\$), we shall not be long at a loss: for in the seventeenth chapter of the same evangelist, ver. 11, we have this petition offered up by our blessed Lord himself: " Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are." From this passage, in my humble conception, it is undeniable, that our great Master designed to pray, that his disciples might be one in the very same sense that he and his Father were one. And in what sense could this be-but that as he and his Father were one in sentiment, were united in the same grand scheme for the salvation and benefit of all mankind, so might also his disciples?

Some of the following verses explain with equal clearness, as it strikes me, what our Saviour meant in these and other places, by 'his Father sending him into the world;' and that it did not mean sending him into this material world from some other place, but merely sending him with a divine commission among the people to preach to them. The words are, ver. 18, "As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world;" shewing that he had sent them into the world, as he had been sent into the world himself by his Father.

So the 21st and 23d verses shew most plainly, that when he declares that 'he is in the Father and the Father in him,' he does not mean to identify his being with that of the Father; but that his disciples might also be in him and he in them, in the very same manner. And as it could not have been his design to represent that his disciples were one being with himself, so neither are we entitled to conclude, when he makes use of parallel expressions, that he meant to denote that he was one being with his Father.

Having no books to consult, but an English Bible and a Greek Testament, I have not perhaps done so much justice to the subject, as most other men would. My principal object has been to evince, that I have not hastily taken up opinions without weighing and considering them; and that if I have adopted such as are erroneous, it has not been for want of diligently searching for, and endeavouring to discover, the truth:—but here we see as through a glass darkly;

the time will arrive when we shall obtain more complete information, and whose opinions will then be found to be correct God only knows. In the mean time, let all who acknowledge the same great Master obey his divine precept of loving one another. Whatever sect they belong to, let them consider themselves as Catholics in the proper sense of the word—members of that universal church which he has established. doing each other all the good they can, though their sentiments in many respects may differ, and thinking and judging candidly and kindly of each other. This I am persuaded is the case with yourself: I wish it were so with all. It was, I am sure, a very friendly wish for my welfare that dictated your letter, and I am much obliged to you for it; though I cannot help thinking, that neither those who are of your opinion, nor those who agree with me in mine, will be in any danger, if they use due diligence in the pursuit of truth, and live up to that share of it, which God, in the exercise of their honest endeavours to know his will and to please him, shall think fit to favour them with. I find but one creed in the New Testament-That Jesus is the Christ. All that has been added to it is mere human invention; and we all know what a mass has been superinduced, partly by mistaken, and partly by mischievous, and wicked, characters, since the first promulgation of the Gospel.

I am, my dear sir, yours, &c.

## LETTER II,

MY DEAR SIR,

The nature of our respective avocations is such, as necessarily to subject our correspondence to very long intervals. Your last letter did not reach me, till a very considerable time had intervened after the writing of mine, to which it was an answer; and unfortunately this, from unavoidable accidents, follows it at a still greater distance, notwithstanding I have frequently proposed to myself to reply to it long before this time.

Though I happen to remain unconvinced by the arguments you have favoured me with,—that my construction of the passage, John x. ver. 27-36, is erroneous,—it has afforded me much gratification to learn what could be advanced upon the subject, by learning and ingenuity such as yours. I am aware, that some of the Greek fathers, after the doctrine of the Trinity had made considerable progress, pressed into their service the words of the 30th verse, "I and my Father are one" (\$\varphi\_{\nu}\$), to shew that they were one being, or one God; and you say that they must have under-

stood their language better than we do. After remarking, that a very long period had elapsed before this construction was attempted to be put upon them, or any endeavour was made to shew from them that the doctrine of the Trinity is not a contradiction, I shall observe, that even contemporaries—which none of these fathers were—do not always correctly interpret works written in their vernacular tongue; but on the contrary are frequently mistaken, and often advance arguments for their respective opinions, which so nearly balance each other, that it is very difficult to determine on which side the scale preponderates.

We lawyers can furnish hundreds of instances of this kind in the construction of modern acts of parliament, which are usually drawn by professional characters, men of learning and experience, well acquainted with their own language, and whose object it is to render the acts they draw as clear, and their meaning as certain, as possible: yet when it is necessary to reduce them into practice, and to decide upon their construction, we have often not only one counsel and one judge against another, but even different courts differing in opinion from each other upon the construction of the same sentence. You would be astonished to hear how many hundreds of judicial determinations there have been-how many conflicting, and clashing, opinions and authorities, to determine the meaning of three acts of parliament, passed in the reigns of Queen Elizabeth and King James the First,

relative to bankrupts, and to the relief of the poor; some of them in the very reigns in which these acts were passed, and others in our own times, though we do not live at a more remote period since their enactment, than the fathers you allude to did after the publication of the Gospel of St. John. Is it any wonder then, that the meaning of one of the fishermen of Galilee, writing in a language which was not his mothertongue, should have been sometimes doubted, and sometimes misunderstood, by writers following him at the distance of two or three centuries? that learned and ingenious persons, many of them recently converted from paganism, and eager to introduce their preconceived notions and opinions into Christianity, the simplicity of which they had begun to corrupt in the very days of the apostles, as the latter themselves lament,-should by degrees, in the course of two or three centuries, have succeeded in the opinions of a considerable part of their readers, many of them similarly circumstanced with themselves, in putting constructions upon several passages in the sacred writings, which the apostolic writers themselves never intended? Is it not rather matter of surprise that these writers should have expressed themselves with so much simplicity and clearness, frequently upon subjects in themselves abstruse and difficult, that by comparing one part of their writings with another, and applying to them the same rules of fair, and just, criticism, which we do to other ancient writings, we should be able to

ascertain their meaning so well, as in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred we find we do,—and in so many instances to detect, and repudiate, the false glosses, and erroneous opinions, which these fathers had fastened upon them?

In the profession of the law we have a rule, which appears to me to be a very sensible and judicious one, namely, To interpret, whenever it is in our power, one part of an act of parliament by another; and when we can ascertain, by the context or otherwise, the sense in which any given words are made use of by the legislature in one part of an act, to conclude, unless the contrary appears, that they intended to make use of them in the same sense in other parts of it; or, if the words do not occur in any other parts of the same act, we endeavour to discover in what sense they are used in other acts made in pari materia. Pursuing this course, which is not only sanctioned by legal experience, but by the principles of sound criticism, it appeared to me, that we could not do better than to interpret the Scriptures by the Scriptures, and particularly each Scripture writer, and teacher, by himself, where it was in our power; as this would enable us to arrive at their meaning with quite as much certainty, as any of the fathers, who happened to live two or three hundred years after their publication.

Granting that some of these fathers, to support their own opinions, should have interpreted  $\dot{\epsilon}_{\ell}$ , as meaning one being or deity, though not so expressed,

and that it would bear this construction; yet this would be a mere conjecture of their own, not depending upon any particular knowledge of the Greek language: and there being no doubt at all, that it will also bear the construction of one thing, because it is actually used in that sense continually, and it is the most obvious and natural sense,-the question will immediately arise, in which of these senses our Saviour used it, or, which is the same thing, the corresponding term in the language he spoke in. You state, that my rendering (meaning the latter) cannot at all be admitted as proper for a creature like ourselves, as Jesus is supposed to be, to say 'I and the Deity are one thing:' and yet if we turn to the seventeenth chapter of the same gospel, ver. 11, we find our Saviour, not only using the very same words again, but alluding to his former use of them, and applying them as perfectly proper to creatures like ourselves: "Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one (¿), as we are." Now it is so manifest, that it is impossible to doubt it, that our Saviour could not by in here mean one being, but one thing; inasmuch as all his disciples could not constitute one being; for which reason it is obvious, that he could only design to use the word, meaning one thing, in a figurative sense in both places, as we speak of very intimate friends, or of man and wife, or principal and agent, whose interests, sentiments, and pursuits are the same; that they are one, or one

and the same thing, denoting unity of design and sentiment, though not of person or of being: and he prays that his disciples may be one, or one and the same thing, as he and his Father were one, or one and the same thing; shewing that he used the word in the same sense as applied to both; from which it follows, that he and his Father were one and the same thing in the same sense that he prayed that his disciples might be one; and consequently were not one in being or in deity, but one in design and purpose. This is so extremely plain, and depends so little upon any niceties of language, but upon the obvious nature, and tendency of the expressions themselves, in whatever language they are proposed to us, that the conjectures of these good fathers—that the design of the speakers was different—will have but little weight with any one who will be at the trouble of forming a judgement for himself. Nor must it be supposed that there were not in their times persons as conversant in the language as themselves, who put quite a different construction upon the words, as will be shewn hereafter.

But to return to the words of our Saviour,—which, whether for the explanation of his meaning, or for any other purpose, are of more importance than the opinions of all the fathers put together,—we find at ver. 20: "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe in me through their word; that they all may be one (\$\frac{5}{6}\$), as thou, Father,

art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one  $(\xi_{\nu})$  in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And the glory which thou gavest me, I have given them; that they may be one  $(\xi_{\nu})$ , even as we are one  $(\xi_{\nu})$ .

It has been sometimes urged, that our Lord's divinity is proved by 'his being in the Father, and the Father in him:' but from this passage it appears demonstrably, that such is not the meaning, as he requests that his disciples may be also in his Father.

The nature of the glory which his Father had given him,-probably the power of working miracles, or of cooperating with his Father in his great plan for the deliverance of mankind from the dominion of sin and death, -has been also misunderstood; for he informs us, that the very same glory had been communicated by him to them. It is observable likewise, that he mentions every thing he had, as having been given to him by his Father; and claims nothing, nor seems to have been conscious of having any thing, in his own right, or from the Holy Ghost: for when he says in another place, "I have power to lay down my life, and have power to take it up again;" in order to exclude all idea of his having such power originally, or independently of the Father, he immediately adds; "This commission I have received from my Father;" meaning evidently, that his authority was delegated and subordinate, exercised by virtue of a commission, or, as the common version renders it still more strongly, a command, received from a superior.

After a mature consideration of all this, I am at a loss to conceive why it should be improper for our blessed Lord, though originally a man like ourselves, to say, 'I and the Deity are one thing, or one and the same thing,' when he expressly states, that they were so in the very same sense in which he prayed that all his disciples also might be one thing. And I cannot coincide in opinion with you, that unless the words be taken in what is called the Orthodox sense, they do not suit the train of his argument, as it appears to me that they suit it exactly. He had before said, "I give to my sheep eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand;" and he assigns as a reason for no one's plucking them out of his hand, "my Father who gave them me is greater than all, and none is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand: I and my Father are one," or one and the same thing. The meaning of which is clear upon my construction, namely, My Father, out of whose hand no one is able to pluck the sheep, having given them to me, and being united with me in the same plan for their preservation, the plucking them out of my hand would be one and the same thing with plucking them out of his, which no one can do. de l'in minollon ban appropri uno el mi spat

We are both agreed that our blessed Lord did not, and could not, use the word  $\varepsilon i_s$  (because it could not be his intention) to represent his Father and himself as one person. Our difference is upon the word  $\varepsilon v_s$ 

which I am content to take as it stands, but which you interpret by introducing the words, To 95101, under a videlicet, as being to be understood, without any thing in the context to support it, these words not having been previously made use of in the whole of this discourse. The introduction of them is not only begging the question, but contrary to all rules of construction, to all the internal evidence, and to all probability. One would suppose from this singular construction, that the words to Delov were in familiar use with our blessed Lord, and that having used them just before, he intended that they should be understood again in this passage; but how great would be the astonishment of a stranger to these discussions to be informed, that neither our Lord in any of his discourses, nor the evangelist in any of his writings, has ever used the word  $\Im_{\epsilon_{10}}$  at all; but that our Lord a little further on in the same gospel, having again used the disputed word ey, has referred to his previous use of it, and shewn that he used it in both places in a sense that would not admit of the interposition of the word Seloy! The selection of the sel

You say, that we are only assured of our preservation by the power of Christ, from the consideration that he is one in power and authority with the Father. If nothing more is meant by this, than the kind of unity mentioned above, I subscribe to it; but if it be meant, that he has any proper power or authority of his own, I must dissent, as it is contrary to the general tenor of the sacred writings, and to his own express declarations, which represent his power as given to him, and all his authority as delegated. He expressly says, "Of mine own self I can do nothing." "My Father, who dwelleth in me, he doth the works." How many illustrious prophets, and chiefs, had the mighty God invested with power to save and preserve the Israelites and others, before the coming of our Saviour! and what was to prevent him from enduing this greatest of the prophets, whom he has raised from the dead, and made a prince, a ruler, and a judge, over all mankind, with power to save and preserve them, both in the present world, and also in that future world, in which "he hath given him authority to reign, and to execute judgement;" though that power, notwithstanding it might be called in one sense his, when it had been given to him, is wholly delegated, and in strictness the power of the Father; and he is not one in power and authority with the Father, any otherwise than as acting as his agent, and cooperating with him in the accomplishment of his glorious designs and purposes? Who shall limit Omnipotence, and say that he could not communicate such power to any of his creatures?

The next passage in your letter is as follows. "The same remark concerning the Greek fathers applies to your criticism on the absence of the article, which they considered no evidence of the reading 'a God,' nor was it ever urged against them when the Greek article was better understood than it is now. Indeed

the English mode of rendering it entirely anarthrous, God, is a fairer interpretation of the Greek than yours of a God; for the intention of the Greek writer was to express a meaning different from the God, that is, the God of some particular people."-Now really, my dear sir, when it is considered that these fathers, and the councils of which they were members, in conjunction with the sovereigns of those days, persecuted the ancient unitarians, who were their opponents, and have taken care to prevent their writings from coming down to us, of which we know little or nothing, but what their adversaries have thought fit to notice in their answers to them, it is rather a strong assertion, that any particular objection was never urged against them, when it may have been done hundreds of times, without our knowing it; and it may very well have happened with them, as it sometimes does with controversial writers in our own times, that, finding things urged against them with so much strength, as to preclude any prospect of a satisfactory answer, they pass them, sometimes possibly by accident and sometimes by design, sub silentio, and proceed to other parts of their adversary's work which promise them greater success.

Your own letter furnishes a striking instance of the imperfect representations we may suppose to have been given by the trinitarian fathers of the writings, and arguments, of their antagonists, the unitarians, as you have, by pure accident I have no doubt, taken no notice of what I considered the strongest part of my argument, as I shall shew hereafter; and a person who should see no other part of our correspondence than your letter, would suppose that I had never urged it.

One would think too, that we were in the present day so ignorant of the Greek language, as to know little, or nothing, of the use of the Greekarticle, and were unable to translate correctly such passages in their writers, as depend for their construction upon the insertion or omission of it; but those who are conversant in Greek literature do not represent the state of it to be such. We have a great number of their very best writers remaining, and have the means of judging, as we do by consulting good writers in our own language, in what manner, and in what senses, they used their article, and how they were to be understood when they inserted or omitted it before a noun. To prove, however, that Deog with the article was not applicable to Christ, but to God the Father only, in the opinion of a very learned Christian writer who flourished not only when the Greek was a living language, and all the niceties belonging to it perfectly understood, but I believe nearer to the age of the apostles than any of the writers you allude to, I shall produce evidence from the writings of one of the fathers themselves. Thus in Origen's Com. vol. ii. p.47\*, you will find that he says, " λεκτεον γαρ αυτοις ότι τοτε μεν αυτοθέος ό θεος έστι,

Huetius's edit. vol. ii. p. 46, 47, (7)

διοπες και ό σωτηρ Φησιν εν τη προς τον πατερα εύχη. ένα γιτ νωσκωσι σε τον μονον αληθινον Θεον· παν δε το παρα το αυτοθεος μετοχη της εκεινε Θεοτητος Θεοποιουμενον, ουκ ό Θεος, αλλα Θεος κυριωτερον αν λεγοιτο ω παντως ό πρωτοτοκος πασης κτισεως, άτε πρωτος τω προς τον Θεον ειναι."

Here you will perceive, that this learned writer, and very early father, expressly declares, that he who is God of himself is  $\delta$   $\vartheta_{\varepsilon o \varsigma}$ , that is, God with the article, and applies this to the Father in the words of our Saviour, who calls him the only true God. He then further says, But every one who is not God of himself, being made God by the participation of his divine nature, is not to be called  $\delta$   $\vartheta_{\varepsilon o \varsigma}$ , that is, God with the article, but  $\vartheta_{\varepsilon o \varsigma}$ , that is, God without the article; amongst whom he particularly specifies Christ, the first born of every creature. Clemens Alexandrinus and Eusebius also advert to the insertion of the article in the one place, and the omission of it in the other, and explain it in a similar manner.

I believe it will be found, that the general tenor of the Scripture writings supports the construction of these learned authors; for though  $9_{\epsilon 0 \zeta}$  without the article is frequently applied to God the Father, yet  $\delta$   $9_{\epsilon 0 \zeta}$  with the article is usually, for any thing I know, universally, (where no particular heathen god is mentioned or referred to,) applied to God the Father only; and seemingly for the best of all possible reasons, par excellence (as the French say), to distinguish him from all others, to whom the word has been applied in an

inferior and less strict sense of it, as the God, or the only God; whilst as to our Saviour and other persons, —for there are many in the Scriptures to whom it would be easy to refer, who are designated by the word  $\Im_{\varepsilon o \varsigma}$ , the term being often used in a lower sense, to denote prophets, magistrates, and rulers,—it is applied to them without the article; and in the passage of St. John now in dispute, where our Saviour intimates, that the word might without impropriety have been applied to himself, as it had been to God's prophets and messengers of old, it is used without the article.

Suppose, for instance, that Moses was one of those prophets to whom the word 'God' had been applied in the Jewish Scriptures, and our Saviour's remark had been, Is it not written in your law, I said to Moses Thou art  $\vartheta_{\epsilon o \varsigma}$  (without the article),—would not any one translating this into a modern language, which possesses an indefinite, as well as a definite article,—as the English language for instance, which has in this respect an advantage over the Greek,-supply the indefinite article, and render it 'a God?' In reality, the meaning is so clearly to be collected from the context, that it is useless for this purpose to enter further into the consideration of any supposed niceties in the construction of the Greek article: and after all, I think you will find by reference to my letter, that my rendering was 'God,' intimating only in a parenthesis that in the original it was  $9_{EOC}$ , God, or a God, in the disjunctive, without putting any construction of my own upon it.

The criticism, therefore, which has occurred, as founded upon any supposed rendering of mine, is inapplicable: but as, by inadvertence probably, you so considered it, and have entered largely upon the subject, I have availed myself of the opportunity of making some remarks upon it. The only thing to be regretted is, that this criticism upon the use of the article has possibly occasioned you to pass over without any observation at all, what constitutes the strength of my argument; namely, that as soon as our Saviour had said "I and my Father are sy" (one thing, according to the literal translation of it), the Jews, who are frequently represented as either misconceiving his meaning from gross ignorance, or as designedly misrepresenting it, took up stones to stone him; upon which he says, "Many good works have I shewed you from my Father; for which of these do ye stone me?" To which the Jews reply, "For a good work we stone thee not, but for blasphemy; and because that thou, being a man, makest thyself God (in the original Deov, God, or a God). Our Saviour answers, "Is it not written in your law, I said ye are Gods? If he called them Gods to whom the word of God came, and the Scriptures cannot be broken, say ye of him whom the Father hath sanctified and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest, because I said I am the Son of God?" From this last answer I stated, that it

appeared to me to be manifestly our Saviour's meaning-If I had called myself God, or a God, I should have been justified by your own Scriptures, in which those prophets and holy men of old, to whom the word of God came, are called Gods (9eo1): but I did no such thing; I only said I was the Son of God, And do you charge me with blasphemy for this?—To what I then observed, I shall here add, that I will venture to say that no human mind, not previously full of the trinitarian hypothesis, or of some of the notions that led to it, making our Saviour in some sense a God who had pre-existed before he came into the world, would ever have drawn from this passage the strange conclusion, that by saying that he and his Father were one thing  $(\xi_{\nu})$ , he intended to convey the meaning that he and his Father were one God, or one and the same Deity, contrary to his own express declaration, that he considered the Jews to be imputing blasphemy to him, and taking up stones to stone him, because he said he was the Son of God. I should think it utterly impossible that any man living, not having a previous bias upon his mind, reading our Saviour's expression "I and my Father are one thing," and the Jews being offended at it, and his own subsequent application of what he considered them to be offended about, would ever have imagined that this illustrious teacher, who had intimated to the Jews that they were mistaken in supposing that he had meant to call himself God, or a God, when he only intended to say that he was the Son of God, designed to represent that he was the very God whose Son he had declared himself to be, or that he was one and the same Deity, or Being with him.

Though you state that some of the fathers shew, from the use of the word by, that the doctrine of the Trinity is not a contradiction,—inasmuch as he does not say two persons are  $\varepsilon i_{\varepsilon}$  (one), but  $\varepsilon \nu$ , that is  $\tau \circ \Im \varepsilon \iota \circ \nu$ , (one divine Being,) as they are pleased, without a tittle of evidence, to explain it,-I must take the liberty of affirming, that to say that two persons are one being is a flat contradiction. I suppose it will not be denied, that a person is a being; consequently two persons must be two beings, and to say that two persons are but one being is a palpable absurdity. So it would be to say that two persons are one thing; except in figurative language, in which sense it may be affirmed with great beauty and propriety; and in this way it was evidently used in the passage in question, which, as I have remarked already, is demonstrated by the context, and by a similar use of the same form of expression by our Saviour himself twice in a subsequent chapter, with an allusion to his former use of it. It would be easy to make such a collection of most curious and ridiculous illustrations of the doctrine of the Trinity from the writings of these good fathers, shewing it likewise to have been, in their apprehension, so different a thing from the Trinity of modern divines, as must convince every reflecting mind, that they were by no means better qualified to explain the

doctrines of that religion which they contributed so largely to corrupt, than their successors in modern times; or than they were to lay down what institutions and discipline, rites and ceremonies, it was the design of our Lord and his apostles to establish, in which we are all agreed that they completely failed.

I cannot by any means agree with you, that what you term the English mode, meaning the mode adopted in the common version, of rendering the word  $\Im \varepsilon o v$ , in the 33d verse, entirely anarthrous, God, is a fairer interpretation of the Greek than mine of a God, for the reason you mention, that it was the intention of the Greek writer to express a meaning different from the God, that is the God of some particular people: and I am rather surprised that you did not perceive that your argument is felo de se; for it is quite clear, that the word  $\delta \, \mathcal{S}_{\epsilon 0 \varsigma}$  (the God) is not used in any part of this, or of the preceding or following chapter of St. John to denote, or allude to, any God, but the God of the Jews, with some of whom our Saviour was then conversing. If therefore it was, as you represent, the intention of the Greek writer to express a meaning different from the God, that is from the God of a particular people, it was his design to express that the Jews, when they charged Jesus with the making himself Deov, (God, or a God,) meant that he made himself something different from & Deog, the God of the Jewish nation; and if he did, then the rendering, that he made himself a God, meaning a God different from

the God of the Jews, is, it appears to me, by far the best, if not the only proper, rendering into English. But, as I have already remarked, these Jews were entirely mistaken in their supposition, whatever it amounted to, as our Saviour himself informed them; and it would be destructive of the trinitarian hypothesis, as far as their opinion went, to have it believed, that they considered our Saviour as representing himself to be God different from  $\delta$   $\Theta_{\epsilon o c}$ , that is the God of the Jews. In fact, there is not a shadow of evidence for supposing, that any heathen god was in the contemplation of any of the speakers in this dialogue. Not only is no such God mentioned, or alluded to, in this conversation, or in the preceding or subsequent two or three chapters, so as to afford a colour of probability that a similar allusion was intended here; but I know not where to find any such allusion in the whole of this writer's gospel; added to which, our Saviour's reply shews, that he did not consider them as having alluded to any heathen god; for he refers immediately to some of their own prophets, who had been called gods, saying, "Is it not written in your law, I said ye are gods? If he called those gods to whom the word of God came, and the Scripture cannot be broken, say ye of him whom the Father hath sanctified and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest, because I said I am the Son of God?" meaning evidently, as I have remarked already, that if he had made himself  $\mathcal{G}_{\epsilon o \nu}$ , (God, or a God,) he should have been justified by their

own Scriptures in so doing, there being an inferior sense of the word, in which the prophets of old, to whom the word of God came, were called 9501 (Gods). Now as these holy prophets are here called 9501, (Gods,) when spoken of collectively in the plural number, each considered separately must have been called  $\Im_{\epsilon o \varsigma}$ , which would in English naturally, if not necessarily, be translated by every English writer having no previous bias upon his mind, with the indefinite article prefixed, 'a God,' and not anarthrous, as you say, 'God;' for where ten or more persons are called gods, no Englishman writing of one of them would say that he was God, but that he was a God; and so of each of the others, that he was a God also, as has been actually done in the passage in Exodus, chap. vii. ver. 1, where the supreme Being, speaking to Moses, says, "See, I have made thee a God unto Pharaoh." After all, it is in reality of little importance in what sense the Jews supposed our Lord to have made himself God, or how the word 9 cov, which they made use of, is to be rendered; as our Lord intimated to them, in language too plain to be misapprehended, that they had been utterly mistaken, for that he had never made himself 950v, (God, or a God,) at all; but that they had charged him with blasphemy, because he had said that he was the Son of God.

It is a most singular fact, that there is scarcely any part of this celebrated passage, so often quoted by trinitarians in support of their doctrine, which will

not be found, when attentively considered, to be in direct opposition to it. I shall give one more instance of it from the conclusion. Our Lord says, that he was sanctified and sent into the world by the Father. His sanctification and mission, we perceive, are mentioned together; as if both took place at the same time, or the former immediately, or shortly, preceded the latter, and took place with a view to it, in order to qualify him for it. But what occasion could there be for him to be sanctified, who, according to the trinitarian hypothesis, was from all eternity most holy, wise, just, and good? If he was sanctified at, or just before, his mission, or at any other time whatever, it follows, that during the whole of an antecedent eternity he must have been unsanctified. If it should be said by the trinitarian, contrary to our Lord's words, (who never speaks of himself by parts and parcels, but as one entire being,) that it was only his human nature that was then sanctified, -this, though it agrees perfectly with the unitarian system, that at a certain period of his life he was by the Father sanctified and sent into the world—that is, sent among the people to preach the Gospel to them, -will not correspond at all with the trinitarian doctrine, which represents the divine Logos, the second person in the Trinity only, as having been sent from heaven into this world to-unite with the human nature, which previously to the supposed miraculous conception had no existence. Supposing it however to have been the divine Logos,

that was sanctified, and sent into the world by the Father, there are other unavoidable inferences which are utterly irreconcileable with the trinitarian scheme. He that sanctifies must, whilst language has any meaning, be considered as greater, or holier, than he who is sanctified by him, as our Saviour himself says, "Which is greater, the gift, or the altar which sanctifies the gift?" Matt. xxiii. 19. In like manner, he who sends his messenger to finish certain work which he had given him to do, (John xvii. 5,) will always be deemed to be superior to the messenger he has dispatched to perform it. How is it also upon the trinitarian hypothesis, that the Holy Ghost had no concern with our Lord's sanctification; and that he is never represented as having been sent by the Holy Ghost, but by the Father only? I am aware that there is another meaning of the Greek word which has been rendered 'sanctified,' by trinitarian translators: but as that will, if possible, militate still more strongly against their system, they will not feel much inclined to adopt it.

It was in reply to an observation made in your former letter,—that the word of God which came to the prophets of old was the Eternal Logos, meaning the second person in the Trinity, namely, our Saviour,—that I produced the parallel passage of the word of Samuel coming to all Israel, to shew that there was no more reason for considering the word of God which came to the prophets to be a person, than the

word of Samuel which came to all Israel: and I quoted the first verse of the first chapter of the Hebrews, as containing direct proof, that it was the Father who spoke by the prophets, and not the Son. This last quotation you pass over in silence; but say that you do not conceive Samuel's word a person, because no other Scripture leads you to adopt such an opinion: neither do I for the same reason; nor do I consider the word of the Father to be a person, because in figurative language it is sometimes personified, as 'wisdom' is in the Old Testament, and as various properties and attributes are in a variety of writers, sacred and profane, ancient and modern. There have been a few instances of the passage in the Psalms, "By the word of the Lord were the heavens made," having been produced to prove that the Son, or Logos, made the material heavens; till it was noticed that this was followed by the words, "and all the hosts of them by the breath of his mouth;" when it became evident that, if the word of the Lord by which the heavens were made was to be taken literally, and was to denote a person, the breath of his mouth, by which all the hosts of them were made, must likewise be taken literally, and mean a person also.

Your quotation from the first chapter of St. John's Gospel depends, not only upon the supposed accuracy of the common version, but upon particular meanings which trinitarians have been accustomed to give to

certain words, without any evidence whatever, till they have at last come to think, that they can mean nothing else. In the first place they universally understand, without a shadow of proof, or even of probability, the words εν αρχη (in the beginning), to mean, 'in the beginning of the world,' the period of the creation of this terraqueous globe; but it is remarkable, that though the apostle uses this expression in more than twenty instances, in fourteen of which it is used to denote the beginning of our Lord's ministry, which there is the strongest reason to think is the sense in which he uses it here,—he never once makes use of it to allude to the creation of the world. Why then are we, without any reason, and contrary to all probability, to put this construction upon it? If we reject it, (and I will venture to affirm no critic would adopt it in the interpretation of any other writings under such circumstances,) every one acquainted with Scripture phraseology knows, that 'being with God' does not mean being God, but being favoured with manifestations of the Divine presence, and with communications of the Divine will, in which sense Moses and other messengers and prophets of the Most High are represented as having been with God; and thus understood, the passage will be perfectly clear and rational. In the beginning of our Lord's ministry he was favoured with a manisfestation of the Divine presence, and with a revelation of the Divine will, and he is, in language common in Scripture, called the Word, which is thus

personified, because he was commissioned to declare, and did declare, the word of God to mankind, more fully, and explicitly, than any other of God's messengers or prophets. The giving of such names in the Holy Scriptures, not only to men, but even to things inanimate, is so frequent, that it is impossible to go far without meeting with instances of it. Thus the great prophet who slew the priests of Baal in the reign of Ahab, was called Elijah, that is, 'my god Jehovah.' The father of Elihu, one of Job's friends, was called Barachiel, meaning 'the very God.' One of Daniel's friends who was cast into the fiery furnace was called Mishael, which means, 'he who is God.' If our Saviour had been called by such names, it would have been considered by trinitarians as most decisive proof of his divinity; and yet they were given to mere mortal men like curselves, though highly favoured by the Supreme Being. It was likewise very common in former times to call men by names denoting what they did, or resembled, whether with respect to other persons or things. Thus in Exodus xxxi. 2, the Supreme Being says of a very wise and skilful workman, "See, I have called by name Bezaleel," which means 'the shadow of God;' and in Genesis xxxii. 28, the name Israel, meaning 'a conqueror of God,' is given to Jacob. In Exodus xvii. 15, even an altar is called "Jehovah my banner." So Quintus Fabius Maximus was called 'the shield,' and Marcellus 'the sword, of Rome. Is it wonderful therefore, that our

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the Lord by the prophet, saying, Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us. Then Joseph, being raised from sleep, did as the angel of the Lord had bidden him, and took unto him his wife; and knew her not till she had brought forth her first-born son, and he called his name Jesus." In the second chapter ascribed to Luke, (ver. 21,) it is said, "And when eight days were accomplished for the circumcising of the child, his name was called Jesus, which was so named of the angel before he was conceived in the womb." A curious fulfilment of a prophecy this, where the prophecy is, that the virgin spoken of by Isaiah shall call the name of her child Immanuel, and the supposed fulfilment, that both the mother and the father-in-law of a child born seven hundred years after, were commanded by an angel to call her child Jesus, which they are stated to have done; and it does not appear, that they, or any one else, ever called him Immanuel during the whole course of his, or their lives, or during the lives of any of his apostles. This naturally creates a desire to examine the prophecy itself, in order to ascertain, whether it does in fact relate to our Lord at all: and I must confess, after having considered it with great attention, it appears to me that it does not It is stated (Isaiah, ch. vii.) that Ahaz king of Judah, being in great distress, on receiving intelligence that Rezin king of Syria, and Pekah king of Israel, had

combined to invade his dominions, and to dethrone him, the prophet was commissioned by the Most High to encourage him, and to assure him that their design should not be successful: but it would appear, that some doubt, or apprehension, still lingered in the monarch's breast, for it is said, (ver. 9,) "If ye will not believe, surely ye shall not be established." And then the Lord is represented as speaking again unto Ahaz by the prophet, as before, saying: "Ask thee a sign of the Lord thy God; ask it either in the depth, or in the height above. But Ahaz said, I will not ask, neither will I tempt the Lord. And he said, Hear ye now, O house of David. Is it a small thing for you to weary men, but will ye weary my God also? Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign. Behold, a virgin (or 'young woman,' as I apprehend it may be rendered; meaning more likely some virgin or young woman then present, and looked to, or pointed at, than a virgin or young woman who was to appear seven hundred years after, of which not the slightest intimation is given)—she (for thus I understand it may be translated) shall conceive and bear a son, and shallcall his name Immanuel. Butter and honey shall he eat, that he may know to refuse the evil, and choose the good; for before the child shall know to refuse the evil, and choose the good, the land that thou abhorrest shall be forsaken of both her kings."

Now there is every reason to believe that this prophetic sign, which was to encourage the doubting sovereign

and his household, was to be manifested in a very short time. If any young woman then present, to whom it might be known to relate, was to be declared pregnant within a very short time after, it would be some indication that the prophetic sign was fulfilling; and when in the course of a few months more, she was delivered of a son, and called his name Immanuel, the sign would be fully accomplished, upon the speedy fulfilment of which the prophet had staked his credit, and the greatest encouragement afforded, that the principal prophecy—which this secondary one, for such it was, was intended to be a sign of-would in due time be accomplished likewise. But what sign could that be to a distressed, and doubting prince, which was not to appear till hundreds of years, not only after his death, but after the accomplishment of the principal prophecy of which it was to be a sign? Is it to be conceived, that any one who doubted the taking place of an event predicted to him, which he thought unlikely to happen, should have his doubts removed, or feel encouraged, by being told, upon the same authority, that a still more extraordinary, and unlikely thing should happen seven hundred years after? This would be completely inverting the order of things, and be just as rational, as if it were to be predicted of any one in the last stage of a consumption, that in three weeks he should be restored to perfect health; and upon his testifying his unbelief, the prophet were to say to him, As you do not appear to

believe my prediction, a sign shall be given to you that will remove all doubt,-Three hundred years hence, one of your descendants shall be emperor of Austria. What would be the probable effect upon the sick man's mind? Would it be at all likely to vanquish his incredulity, and to impart encouragement and comfort to him in his distress? But there would be a much greater, probability of its producing that effect, if the prophet, of whom he had a high opinion, were to pledge his credit upon something that was to take place very soon after, the not happening of which according to his prediction, he must well know would destroy it altogether, false prophets not being in the habit of acting in this manner. Besides, if the sign itself was not to appear till hundreds of years after the monarch himself should be in his grave, and after the event itself, of which it was to be the sign, should have taken place, -what propriety could there have been in declaring, that this event, the principal thing predicted, should happen before the child should know to refuse the evil, and choose the good, when it would have actually taken place hundreds of years before the child was born? Would it not have been more simple, and more natural, to have said at once, It shall happen before he is born? What other reason could there have been for fixing at all, upon the period when he should know to refuse the evil, and choose the good, than that the whole referred to events at no great distance, which were to take place after

the child's birth, but before he should arrive at years of discretion?

To such events, I can entertain no doubt, it did relate, and not at all to our Saviour: for it appears from the history of that period, as recorded in the fifteenth, sixteenth, and seventeenth chapters of the second book of Kings, that Ahaz reigned but sixteen years. In what year of his reign this confederacy was formed against him, does not appear; but it was probably not very soon, for it appears that he had time fully to develop his character, by forsaking the law of the Lord, and practising all the abominations of the heathens ; and then it is said that the kings of Syria and Israel came up against him: but after having besieged Jerusalem, though without success, and conquered Elath, Ahaz, we are informed, in the course of that very war, applied to the king of Assyria for assistance, who accordingly attacked Damascus the capital of Syria, and took it, and carried away its inhabitants captive to Kir, and slew Rezin; by which the firstpart of the prophecy. was very speedily accomplished. There is some little confusion in the accounts relative to Pekah; but as it is stated that he was slain in the twentieth year of Jotham the father of Ahaz,—and Jotham is said to have reigned but sixteen years, and Ahaz to have succeeded him in the seventeenth year of Pekah's reign, and Pekah to have reigned twenty years, -it is evident that Pekah must have perished in the third or fourth year of Ahaz; so that even supposing the confederacy to have been formed in the very first year of the reign of Ahaz, and the young woman, or the virgin, to whom the prophet alluded, to have married, and borne a child in the shortest possible time, the whole prophecy was fulfilled before that child could have been of sufficient age to know to refuse the evil, and choose the good; that is, before his arrival at years of discretion; since he could only have been three years old, probably not nearly so much, when all was accomplished. I feel it impossible for me to say, after this, that I think that the application of the prophecy in question by the author of the supposed first chapter of St. Matthew,with all reason and probability, and every fact we know any thing of, against it, standing as it does, totally unconfirmed by any Scripture writer whomsoever, not one of whom makes any similar application of it,—is entitled to the least degree of credit.

But to return to the subject of the incarnation.— This doctrine, whether the incarnation meant by it be supposed to have been effected by the assumption of the human nature of our Lord into the godhead, that is, into the divine Logos, the supposed second person in the Trinity, according to the creed ascribed to St. Athanasius, or the entering of the divine Logos into the human nature, which alone corresponds with the term 'incarnation,' was never taught by our Lord himself; and where to find it, or any thing like it, in the whole compass of Scripture, I am at a loss to discover. Upon the first of these suppositions, besides its

being no incarnation at all, but on the contrary an indeation,—if I may be allowed to coin an awkward word to express it,—it is, as I have remarked already, contrary even to the trinitarian interpretation of the passage in the first chapter of St. John, "and the word was made flesh;" but might have answered better, had it run thus, "and the flesh was made word;" though it would not then have been quite correct.—The second supposition, that the divine Logos entered into the human nature, and became permanently united to it, though it would be a proper incarnation, is also at variance with the trinitarian translation of the passage in St. John just quoted, which conveys no other idea in itself, than that of transmutation, which is very different from entering into, and becoming united to, any thing.

But waving all further observation on these two discordant hypotheses, let us consider the incarnation simply as a permanent union of the divine Logos, the supposed second person of the Trinity, with the human nature of our Lord, so as to constitute together with it one person, having two distinct natures, which is, I believe, what all modern European trinitarians are agreed in:—where, my dear sir, is this to be found, except in the creeds and decrees of uninspired, and fallible, councils, and synods, and the writings of uninspired, and fallible, theologians? Our Lord never gives the most distant hint of his having two natures; never speaks of any union, but between himself and the Father, nor of any superior

Being dwelling in him, but the Father only. He speaks of himself plainly and simply as a man, who had told the Jews the truth, and whom they sought on that account to kill. John viii. 40. If he had been conscious of the divine Logos—which is supposed by the trinitarians to have made the heavens, and earth, and all things, and to be omnipotent-being inseparably united to him, and constituting one person with his human nature, how could he have said "I can of mine own self do nothing." John v. 30. "The Father who dwelleth in me, he doth the works." John xiv. 10. Where do any of the apostles speak of the incarnation, or of any two natures in our Lord? which they might have been expected frequently to have mentioned as doctrines of great importance, as the trinitarians of the present day do. How was it that Peter in his first sermon after the resurrection, when he described to his countrymen who our Lord was, and converted three thousand of them, never so much as hinted at this stupendous; and infinitely important, doctrine; but merely described him as a man approved of God, by miracles, signs, and wonders, which God did by him?

Is it not most extraordinary, if the divine Logos was inseparably united to the human nature of our Lord, so as to constitute with it but one person, that it does not appear to have enabled him to perform one miracle, to impart one divine revelation, or to bear one suffering? That it did not enable him to perform any miracles is

undeniable, not only from the absence of all proof, or assertion, to this effect, but also from his own express declarations so often alluded to: "I can of mine own self do nothing. The Father who dwelleth in me, he doth the works." That it did not enable him to make any divine revelations, appears likewise from his own declarations: "My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me." John vii. 16. And he elsewhere declares that it was his Father who sent him. John v. 37. So he afterwards says upon the same subject; " As my Father hath taught me, I speak these things." John viii. 28. Here it appears by strong implication, not only that what he spoke was from his Father, but that he did not previously know it himself, and required to be taught it by, and to learn it from, another. Again he says, "For I have not spoken of myself, but the Father which sent me, he gave me a contmandment, what I should say, and what I should speak. Whatsoever I speak therefore, even as the Father said unto me, so I speak." John xii. 49, 50. That it did not enable him to bear any sufferings, is to be collected, not only from there being no proof, or assertion, that it did, but from the account given us of his suffering in the garden, just before his crucifixion, when the evangelist informs us, Luke xx. 43, that "there appeared an angel unto him from heaven strengthening him;" which would have been both absurd, and useless, if the divine Logos had enabled him to bear his sufferings. What a lamentable exhibi-

tion is made by this text, upon the trinitarian hypothesis of the incarnation, of a created being strengthening his Creator,—of a poor finite angel of limited powers, a being not even pure in the sight of his God, nor free from the charge of folly before him, strengthening Omnipotence and Omniscience! Some trinitarians perhaps would contend, that it was only the human nature of our Lord that was strengthened by the angel. But in the first place the evangelist does not say so, but speaks of our Lord generally, and entirely; and, so far from confining what he says to a part of him, that is to one particular nature, does not appear from any part of his writings to have had the least idea of our Lord's having two natures. What right have we then to add to his words mere suppositions, made expressly to favour an hypothesis of our own? Secondly, all that constituted our Lord, even according to the trinitarian doctrine, made but one person; therefore when the evangelist speaks of him, he must be understood to speak of that person, and not of any particular part of him, unless he tells us so, which he has not done. Thirdly, as according to the trinitarians, the divine nature was inseparably united to the human nature, what occasion could there be to send an angel from heaven to strengthen the human nature, when it had already almighty power always united to and present with it, which must have rendered the assistance of a finite, limited, and created being quite superfluous? If there had been any proof of such an

incarnation as is contended for, it would not have been pretended, that we are any where informed that the divine nature refrained from aiding the human nature upon this trying occasion to bear its sufferings, the sacred writings being quite silent upon the subject of two natures in Christ, and the trinitarians on the contrary maintaining, that its assistance was absolutely necessary to enable the human nature to bear the infinite punishment, which, according to them, the justice of the Supreme Being must otherwise have inflicted upon the elect, who are redeemed, and saved, by the death and sufferings of our Lord. The power of the divine nature then, that is, almighty power, must, according to their hypothesis, have been exerted. The assistance of an angel, therefore, if it were considered merely as superadded to that of almighty power, would not have been equal to the dust of the balance; but when considered as strengthening OMNIPOTENCE, the absurdity is monstrous. Who can wonder, that the great Newton should pronounce of such a doctrine, that the time would come, when it would be exploded, as an absurdity equal to transubstantiation? That time is now, thank God! fast approaching. The night is far spent, the day is at hand, indeed hath already begun to dawn upon us, and will shine more and more, till it arrives at it's meridian brightness. How few were there in Sir Isaac Newton's time, who thought as he did! How many thousands are there at present in this country only! How few were the unitarian places of worship within our own remembrance!—four or five perhaps in the whole kingdom. At present there are few places of any magnitude without one; and if we may form a judgement from what we know ourselves, and hear from others, there may be some foundation for the report, that there are more unitarians within the church, than out of it.

The unitarian system stands unencumbered with any of the difficulties we have just been contemplating; considering our blessed Lord, though the greatest, and most distinguished of God's messengers, and prophets, to be a man of like passions with ourselves, endued with exquisite sensibility of feeling, and perfect knowledge of the extent of his approaching sufferings, and, therefore, for a moment overwhelmed with distress, at the prospect of what he was so soon to undergo,—it acknowledges the kind, and gracious, interposition of his Father, and our Father, of his God, and our God, in sending an angel, as he had occasionally done before in the case of others of the prophets and holy men of old, to comfort, and strengthen him.

Having been unable to find the doctrine of the incarnation, or any thing like it, in any of the sacred writings, I am as little able to discover in what part of the Scriptures our Saviour, the humble Jesus, claims, as you say, true deity; or where he claims our worship, if by worship be meant any thing more than that homage, and reverence, which we are bound to pay

to one who has been raised by his Father to the high office of prophet, priest, and king, to the whole human race, and which is analogous to the homage paid by us to earthly sovereigns and superiors, which was frequently called worship; and the persons entitled to it were called worshipful, even in our own country, at no very remote periods, and of which we have the remains to this day. Thus we say his worship the mayor of such a place, their worships the king's justices, and the like. But that religious worship, which is paid to God, and particularly that most important part of it, prayer, he never claims; for though he, and his apostles after him, subsequent to his ascension, in numerous places command, and exhort us to pray to the Father, there is not one solitary instance of any of them ever commanding, or requesting us to pray to him; which would be most extraordinary indeed, if, as you say, he claimed true deity, and therefore claimed, or was entitled to, religious worship; especially as both he, and his apostles, exhort us to do many things of comparatively very much less importance. This remarkable fact throws strong light upon the three or four very doubtful passages, in which the trinitarians conceive, that prayer was in a few instances actually addressed to him; but which in my apprehension prove no such thing; the persons who are supposed to have thus prayed to him having both been persons who were after his ascension favoured with his personal presence, when they might make their re-

quests to him as to any other superior; and even if this were called praying to him, it would be nearly in the same sense, as we pray our superiors among mankind to bestow upon us favours which we are desirous of obtaining from them; a sense very different from that in which we pray to the invisible God, whom no mortal eye hath seen, or can see, as a part of our religious worship, thereby ascribing to him omnipotence, omniscience, and omnipresence. The application of the word in the former sense, to requests made to our superiors, even among mankind, is very common, if attended to: Thus the king is said to be prayed to confer some special mark of his favour upon a particular person who has merited it; a criminal convicted of felony is desired to pray his clergy; and a plaintiff prays judgement against a defendant. I believe it would be extremely easy, in every one of the instances alluded to, to shew, that there was either direct proof, or a high degree of probability, that the person represented as invoking, or making any request to, Jesus Christ, not only had been, but was at the very time, favoured with a personal communication with, or sight of, him. Can we, therefore, in the absence of all precept, safely build such an important doctrine upon a few obscure passages like these? It may be said, that our Saviour would not command any prayers to be offered up to himself, during his state of humiliation, before his resurrection; -but is it to be believed, that neither he, nor his apostles, when alluding to

prayers to be offered up after his resurrection and ascension, when he was invested with all his glory,—which is done in very numerous instances—should direct all these prayers to be addressed to the Father, and not one of them to him, if he was equally the object of prayer as the Father? If it were so, we might naturally expect to find as many instances of prayer being commanded to be made to him, as to the Father. Let the Christian, who makes the Scriptures his study and his rule, judge for himself.

It might have been expected likewise, supposing the trinitarian hypothesis to be true, and that religious worship, including prayer, is to be addressed to two other persons besides the Father, one of whom is the Holy Ghost, that we should have been commanded in numerous instances to have prayed to the latter; but no such precept is to be found any where. How is this to be accounted for? Some have said, that our Lord's humility, whilst on earth, prevented him from directing prayers to be made to himself; and also, that whilst he was personally present with his disciples, it was unnecessary. But our Lord, whilst in this world, had none of that false humility which has been supposed: upon all proper occasions, he declined not to assert his claims to those honours, with which it had pleased the Father to invest him, declaring himself to be a king, to have been born for that purpose, to be greater than Solomon, and the like; and though prayer to him, whilst on earth, was unnecessary, how is

it, that when he is directing men how they should pray, and whom they should worship, at future periods, he names the Father, and him only, as the object of prayer and religious worship, even when he adverts to himself upon the occasion, and commands his disciples to pray to the Father in his name, without ever intimating to them in the slightest manner that they might also pray to himself? But supposing that from humility, or any similar cause, he did not direct that his followers should, either then, or at any future period, pray to himself; none of these causes will account for his never praying to the Holy Ghost, nor requiring any of his followers to pray to him, then, or at any future time, supposing the Holy Ghost to be a person equal to the Father, and equally God with him. Still less will they account for the singular fact, that none of the apostles, after our Lord's ascension, appear to have ever prayed to the Holy Ghost, or to have commanded any of their disciples to do it; nor do we find that any of them ever did. It was never disputed among Christians, that it is the indispensable duty of mankind to pray to God; but in this case we have a person supposed to be God, whom no one was ever commanded to pray to, and to whom, in point of fact, it does not appear that any one ever did pray, during the life of the great founder of Christianity, nor during the lives of his apostles, whom he commissioned to preach, and explain his doctrines.

Let the trinitarian solve this difficulty, for it goes to

uniplases.

Saviour, who was sent to declare God's word so fully and completely to mankind, should be called the 'Word of God?' and is there on that account any reason whatever for supposing him to be that very God, whose word he was declared to be? Is not the contrary to be inferred?—Upon the subsequent clause of the sentence, that "the word was  $\Im \varepsilon \circ \varsigma$ " (God, or a God), I shall remark, that we have seen already, that the prophets to whom the word of God came (and to which I may add even magistrates and rulers) have frequently been called gods; yet it appears, that the persons thus distinguished were mortal men, "and were to die like other men, and to fall like any of the princes." These gods are also called upon to "worship him, who is Lord above all the earth, who is exalted above the gods." See Psalm lxxxii. What reason then should we have for concluding (supposing the same word to have been applied to Christ in this chapter, particularly as it stands without the article), that it denoted him to be a god in any other sense? If the word  $\Im \varepsilon \circ \varsigma$ (supposing it to be applied to our Saviour) is not used in an inferior sense, as it was when applied to other messengers and prophets, who were men like ourselves, why is not our Saviour frequently called δ 9505 as well as the Father, who is so called in the Scriptures, hundreds, not to say thousands of times? For what reason is this distinction made without a difference? This is a curious problem, which it will be very difficult to solve upon trinitarian principles: but if we interpret

Scripture by Scripture, and consider Christ to be called  $9_{600}$ , like other divine messengers and prophets, because the word of God came to him, the solution is easy, and obvious. The tenth chapter throws light upon, and explains, the use of the word  $\Im \epsilon o \varsigma$  in this chapter, and the difficulty is entirely removed. In both, the words  $\vartheta_{\varepsilon o \varsigma}$ , and  $\vartheta_{\varepsilon o \nu}$ , are without the article. In 2 Esdras, vii. 3, (which I do not quote as any authority, but only to shew how the word 'God' was sometimes used in ancient times,) it is applied to an angel who was sent, the words being, "There was sent unto me the angel who had been with me before; and he said unto me, Rise, Esdras, and hear the word that I am come to tell thee: and I said, Speak on, my God." We in modern times have confined the word 'God' to the Most High, the Creator of heaven and earth; but the ancients did not: and whenever we interpret their writings, we must do it according to their mode of using the word, and not our own. You are aware, I have no doubt, that very learned men have denied the application of the word λογος, as well as the word 9εος, to Christ, in the beginning of this chapter, altogether; -but with that controversy I do not meddle.

You suppose from the same chapter, that all things were made by our Saviour, and that "without him was not any one thing (¿) made that was made." From which you infer, that he was not made or created, as he could not make himself: but for this construction

you rely entirely upon the rendering of the verb vioual in the common version-which is depending upon a broken reed. I apprehend that this word is made use of seven hundred times in the New Testament, but not once to denote creating,—that in this very Gospel it is used more than fifty times, signifying 'to be,' 'to be done, performed, or transacted, 'to come,' to become,' 'to happen;' but never to make or create. There are very few trinitarians who would not laugh at me, if I were to require them to adopt a translation which had been made unfavourable to their hypothesis, by rendering a word in a sense in which it was not used once in ten times. They must excuse me, therefore, for declining to accede to a translation, which is rendered favourable to it by translating a word in a sense in which it is not only not used once in seven hundred times, but never used at all, in the whole compass of Scripture. Had it been actually used two or three times in this sense, we should not have been justified, upon any principles of sound criticism, in so interpreting it, contrary to evidence so preponderating:but who would think of adopting such an interpretation, with all the evidence against it? and this to support the most improbable and incredible of all doctrines, namely, that Jesus Christ, who was born of a woman, whose brethren we are admitted to be, and joint heirs with him in the heavenly inheritance; who is represented as wholly dependent upon the Father, and deriving all his powers from him; as having

in his distress offered up prayers and supplications, with a strong cry, and with tears, to him, as able to save him from death; as having been raised from the dead by the power of the Father; as having no power to appoint places at his right hand, and at his left, in the future state; as not knowing even the day of that judgment, in which he is to act so distinguished a part; as being exalted by God to a kingdom as a reward for his obedience and suffering-a kingdom, however, which is to have an end at a future period, when he is to deliver it up to the Father, and is to be subject to him;—that this Jesus is equal to that great Being, upon whom he constantly depended, who did all this for him, to whom he is indebted for all things, and is to be ultimately subject, -credat qui vult: but I should think that few persons, not educated upon trinitarian principles, would be found among the number. The sense that is warranted by the corresponding use of the word in other parts of Scripture is, that "all things were done or performed by him, and without him was not any thing done that was done."

As you have (after assuming contrary to evidence that  $\gamma ivo\mu \alpha i$  here means to create) interpreted the words 'all things' without any limitation, and evidently considered them as including, not only the heavens and the earth, with every thing in them, but also all persons whomsoever; it will be necessary for me to make a few observations upon what appears to me, to be the most proper manner of interpreting these words

also, which I conceive ought to be done in the exercise of a sound discretion, with due attention to the subject matter, and also to the scope and design of the writer: and if his subject be the Christian dispensation, and the beginning of it by the ministry of Christ, the words will naturally, and easily, denote, all things pertaining to the commencement of that dispensation. If the subject had been the reign of a king, or the campaign of some victorious general, and it had been said, All things were done or performed by him; by these words it would have been immediately understood, that all things connected with his government, or command, had been done by him, or by his authority, agency, or directions. So in the writings of the same apostle, (1 John ii. 20,) he says to certain of his disciples, "Ye have an unction from the Holy One, and know all things;" which no one understands to mean, that he ascribed omniscience to these disciples; but, limiting it by the context, and putting a reasonable construction upon it, understands it to signify that they knew all things belonging to the Christian system, which it was necessary for them to know, to guard against the misrepresentations of some deceivers, or antichrists, who had gone forth into the world.

Your inference, that Jesus Christ was not made, or created, because he could not make himself, rests entirely upon the rendering of the word γινομαι, and the sense in which the words 'all things' are to be understood: but it did not happen to occur to you,

that even if the former is rendered create, and the latter are taken in an unlimited sense, the inference is clearly a non sequitur; for, supposing him to have created all things, it does not follow that he created all persons; and therefore he himself might have been created by some other person: and if it be contended, that he created all persons, as well as all things, it will follow, that he created the Father, and the Holy Ghost, and consequently, that he only, in the proper sense of the word, is God; which latter doctrine some Christians have actually held. In the remaining part of the quotation I see nothing in favour of the trinitarian hypothesis, even if the common version were correct. The words 'being made flesh' would denote not only that he was made, but that he was made a man, flesh being very naturally put for man in many parts of Scripture. But in fact there are no grounds for believing that the word ywould here means to make, but rather to be, which is one of the senses in which it is most frequently used, when the construction will be; "And the word was flesh (or a man); and we saw his glory, not as the glory of God, (TOU DEOU,) but as of the only-begotten son of God;" the word 'only-begotten' being used solely by way of eminence, or as denoting greater kindness, and attention, to a particular son, -as Isaac was said to be the only-begotten son of Abraham, though Abraham had other sons. I apprehend, that this word, and avannos, are used indiscriminately in translating the same word from the

Hebrew, and the apostle John uses it where the other New Testament writers employ  $\alpha\gamma\alpha\pi\eta\tau\circ\varsigma$  (beloved), shewing plainly that they are used syonymously. As referring to the Deity, indeed, it is impossible that the literal sense of it can be understood. It must be taken figuratively; and as God has, and represents himself to have, many sons, it is fair to conclude, that the word was used to denote the superior love, which God had for this particular son, and the higher honours, with which he had invested him, having given him a name above all other names—an expression nevertheless which good sense must limit; it being manifest that it could not be above the name of him who had given it, and who of course might have withheld the gift, if he had thought fit.

You say that "when you find both divinity and humanity ascribed to this one person (meaning our Saviour) in innumerable passages of Scripture, you cannot refuse to admit this doctrine, that in the unity of the Deity there is a grand distinction, that admits the incarnation of one who claims true deity, and who therefore claims your worship."—I shall reply to this passage, which embraces many points, as distinctly as I can. In the first place, I am utterly at a loss, where to find the innumerable passages of Scripture, which ascribe divinity to our Saviour, and am strongly inclined to believe, that if you were to set about making a collection of all such passages, you would not only not find them innumerable, but be

surprised to perceive, like others who have undertaken the same task before you, how few there are, which any person, not a trinitarian, would consider as even doubtful: and with respect to the latter class of passages, common sense, as well as common prudence, would forbid us to build any important doctrine upon such foundations. To possess any weight for this purpose, a passage must not only admit of, but require, the construction that will establish the point contended for, especially if it be, prima facie, extraordinary and improbable.—As to the incarnation you allude to, I can see no proof of it in the Scriptures; and can only say with Sir Isaac Newton, that I believe the time will come, when the doctrine of the incarnation, as commonly received, will be exploded as an absurdity equal to transubstantiation. This most extraordinary doctrine is usually supposed to be taught in the first chapter of St. John, and also, together with the miraculous conception, in the reputed two first chapters of St. Matthew and the reputed two first chapters of St. Luke, in which four last, as being supposed to contain authentic accounts of our Lord's genealogy, and birth, we should most expect to find both. The first chapter of St. John I have already remarked upon, and shall here only add, as to the expression "and the word was made flesh," that supposing the verb ywouar could fairly be rendered in this place to create or make, which I think I have shown it cannot, yet neither interpretation would suit the trinitarian hypo-

thesis, and still less the doctrine of the incarnation, Let us see what can be made of the translation "and the word was created flesh." It will be objected immediately upon the trinitarian scheme, that the Word, or the divine Logos, was not created at all, but was uncreated in the strictest sense; and besides, upon the principle of the incarnation it will be further urged, that in that sense he could not be said to have entered into the flesh, and to be in it, or incarnate, but to be flesh itself, flesh altogether. If the word 'made' be adopted, not in the sense of created, but as having existed before as one substance or being, and having been subsequently made another, this suggests no other idea than that of transmutation, like that of water being made wine, or stones bread, and not at all that of entering into, and being in another unchanged, as the doctrine of the incarnation requires. The supposed assumption of the manhood into the godhead is the reverse of the incarnation, which supposes the entering of the divine nature into the human nature, and remaining there incarnate. Alas! that the great Creator of the universe, whom the heavens, the heaven of heavens cannot contain, who fills the boundless regions of space with his presence, should ever have been imagined to have entered wholly, and entirely, into a human embryo, and to have shut himself up for nine months in a narrow cell!

I shall now proceed to consider the accounts given of the supposed miraculous conception, and incarnation, in what is called the first chapter of St. Matthew. It is there said, that the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: "When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost. Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not willing to make her a public example, was minded to put her away privately. But, while he thought on these things, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife; for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost: and she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus; for he shall save his people from their sins. Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us. Then Joseph, being raised from sleep, did as the angel of the Lord had bidden him, and took unto him his wife; and knew her not, till she had brought forth her first-born son; and he called his name Jesus." Now it is remarkable, that not a single word in this passage alludes to any thing like the incarnation, or even the pre-existence, of our blessed Lord. If it prove any thing, it proves that our Lord was, as Adam had been before him, not formed according to the ordinary course of generation, but without the intervention of a human father, though

by the instrumentality of a human mother; in which last respect he differed from Adam. It would be, if the account were correct, a case of miraculous conception; but there is not the most distant hint of any superior being having entered into him, and become incarnate in him; much less the supposed divine Logos; for all that took place is ascribed to the Holy Ghost, Mary being stated "to have been found with child of the Holy Ghost," and that which was conceived in her, it is said, was of the Holy Ghost. Now if this statement ever proceeded from the pen of the evangelist Matthew, and was therefore to be depended upon, it would prove that our-Lord, at least as to his human nature, was begotten, not by the Father, but by the Holy Ghost; and is not (as those parts of the Scriptures which are universally received as genuine represent) the son of the Father, but of the Holy Ghost. I think, however, that we have proofs sufficient, both external and internal, (but especially the latter,) that what are supposed to be the first two chapters of this Gospel are spurious. I shall advert to a few of them, after just hinting, what almost every one knows, that the division into chapters is quite a modern invention.

In the first place, they are entitled "The Book of the Generation of Jesus Christ, the Son of David;" a title not at all fit for the whole work; which gives them much the appearance of having been a separate treatise, not originally belonging to the Gospel, but which,

having in process of time been prefixed to it, as being supposed to contain the earliest intelligence of our Lord, by some person who happened to have both, at length was first copied upon the same parchment, and afterwards, without any interval, according to the ancient manner of writing, so as to present the appearance of an uninterrupted narration.—In the next place, in order to favour the idea of there having been exactly fourteen generations from Abraham to David, exactly the same number from David to the Babylonish captivity, and the same number from that event to Christ,—a coincidence which, if it were real, yet, not answering any particular purpose, was unworthy of notice, and would appear puerile in any other place,—the genealogy is placed upon the bed of Procrustes, and lopped of some of its members. In the third place, it is irreconcileably at variance with the genealogy given of Joseph and of our Saviour in the third chapter of St. Luke. Fourthly, supposing the first sixteen verses (including the genealogy, but excluding the remark about the fourteen generations,) to be authentic, and the omission of some generations to have happened from the carelessness of the transcribers of some very early manuscripts, the object of the writer is, by tracing our Lord's pedigree through Joseph, his immediate father, to David his remote ancestor, to prove that he was the son of David: but the rest of the chapter is in direct opposition to this, it being the design of the writer of it, whoever he may have been, to shew that

our Lord was not the son of Joseph; which important link in the chain failing, the genealogy falls entirely to the ground, and it becomes impossible to answer satisfactorily a question which has been very properly asked, "Of what consequence was it to give the genealogy of Joseph for that of Jesus, when, according to this, Jesus was no more descended from Joseph than he was from Herod?" It is further to be remarked, that this most extraordinary account of our Lord having been born of a virgin, without the intervention of a human father, by the power of the Holy Ghost, which was a fact of the utmost consequence, and might have been expected to have been referred to again and again, both in the course of this gospel, and in all other accounts of our Saviour, as an article of prime importance, and to which his father Joseph being a carpenter, his being of Nazareth, and many other things which are repeated frequently in the Gospels and Epistles, are in comparison nothing, -is never mentioned directly or indirectly, nor is any one of the other remarkable occurrences comprised in these chapters, in any subsequent parts of the gospels of Matthew or Luke, in either of the other gospels, or in any one of the epistles. Could this possibly have happened, if any of these writers had ever heard of, and believed, the most extraordinary events contained in these spurious chapters?—for so, considering these, and other strong objections to their credit, I cannot hesitate to call them. Could these prominent, and

most material facts, -which, if correct, would rank amongst the most striking features of the history,have been neglected by any historian whatever, or have been wholly passed over, even in an abridgment? How are we to account for the total silence of Mark and John in their respective gospels, and that of Paul in his numerous epistles, in which he gives such ample details respecting our Lord, and the various relations in which he stood both to God and man? Had these writers wholly lost their memories; or did they possess minds so singularly constructed, as to recollect numerous circumstances comparatively insignificant and unimportant, and at the same time to forget some of the most extraordinary, and unexampled events relative to the illustrious personage whose history they were writing, that had ever occurred since the creation of the human race?

There are some other unaccountable circumstances connected with these events, supposing them to be true, that cannot be passed in silence. It appears by the chapters both of Matthew and Luke, which are now in question, that these things were not done in a corner; that the knowledge of them was not confined even to the members of our Lord's own family; but, according to Matthew, some of them were known to the magi, to Herod, and all the chief priests, and scribes, whom he convened in council; and, by the slaughter of the innocents, to all the Jewish nation, and others; according to Luke, to the shepherds, and

those to whom they related what they had seen; to Simon, to Anna the prophetess, and all who looked for redemption in Israel, to whom she appears to have communicated what she knew, which, if correct, must have fixed the eyes of the whole country upon him at once as the promised Messiah, and they could never have lost sight of him afterwards as such :-- yet not one person appears to have believed him to be the Messiah, when he afterwards came forward in that character, on account of any of these wonderful transactions; not even his own brothers, who, like many of their countrymen, did not believe in him, after he had begun to perform miracles, as such (John vii, 5); but all who did believe, are represented as having done so, on account of the miracles which he wrought in his own person, to which alone he himself appealed; and never once to a single occurrence related in these spurious chapters; nor were any of them, mirabile dictu, ever appealed to as proofs of his mission by any of his apostles. All this is utterly inexplicable, except upon the principle of these chapters being the interpolations of a later period. How different likewise are the public exhibitions contained in these narratives, from the singularly cautious and reserved manner in which our Lord spoke of himself as being the Messiah, till just as he was upon the point of being offered up! notwithstanding which, upon his performing some of his miracles, the people could hardly be prevented from taking him by force, and making him a temporal king, though never with the smallest allusion to any of the miraculous occurrences detailed in the chapters in question.

I shall add one more observation upon the manner in which the author of the two chapters falsely, as I must contend, ascribed to St. Matthew, deals with ancient prophecy: and I mention this particularly, because you seem to lay considerable stress upon the names given, and supposed to be given, to our blessed Lord, as proofs of his being God, though without particularizing them, which the limits you prescribed to yourself undoubtedly would not admit of. The prophecy in question is that of Isaiah vii. 14, already mentioned: "Behold a virgin shall conceive; and bear a son, and shall (that is the virgin shall) call his name Immanuel," which this writer thus applies; "The angel of the Lord appeared unto him (that is Joseph) in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife; for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost: and she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus; for he shall save his people from their sins." The corresponding chapter of Luke, ver. 31, represents the angel to have appeared to Mary, and to have said to her; "Behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt 'call his name Jesus." The writer of the first chapter ascribed to St. Matthew then proceeds; "Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of

the root of his system. The first Christians were commanded to pray for the Holy Spirit, but never to the Holy Spirit, and they were never directed to pray for it to any one but the Father. It is stated, that it should be poured out upon them, and that they who possessed it should perform miracles, and signs, and wonders; from which it appears to me to be obvious, that it only means a power, and not a person. Thus Elisha is represented as having requested, that he might have a double portion of the spirit of Elijah, and it is said that the spirit of Elijah rested on Elisha; meaning manifestly, not a person belonging to Elijah called his spirit, making two persons in one being, but the same power which Elijah had possessed before he was separated from Elisha. The spirit of God, instead of being a distinct person, is expressly compared to the spirit of a man, in 1 Cor. ii. 11, where it is said; "For what man knoweth the things of a man, but the spirit of a man which is in him? In like manner also none knoweth the things of God, but the Spirit of God." Upon the whole, therefore, I conceive myself fully justified in considering the making of the Holy Spirit a person, to be a great corruption, introduced into Christianity by human invention, without any warrant for it in the sacred writings.

You tell me, that as to the figurative term 'the word,' I shall readily admit that the term 'Father' is figurative too. I accede to this, believing both to be figurative. I consider the term 'the word' to be figura-

tively applied to Christ, and that he is figuratively called 'the word,' meaning the word of God; because that he, the greatest and most illustrious of God's messengers and prophets, came to declare the word of God more fully, and completely, to mankind, than all his predecessors: so that not the Jews only, to whom alone the dispensation he came to supersede was addressed, but all the nations of the earth, might know, and be well assured, of God's gracious designs by the ministration of this his most favoured minister and prophet, to raise them all from the dead, and to confer upon them immortal happiness in a future state: and it appears to me, to be not at all more strange, that he should therefore be called figuratively the 'word of God,' than that Quintus Fabius Maximus should have been called 'the shield of Rome,' because he more successfully defended the Romans against the Carthaginians than any of their generals who had preceded him.

I consider the word 'Father' to be figurative as applied to God, not as having begotten either Christ, or other men, who are also frequently called his sons, in the literal sense of the word, which would be absurd; but because he has created both ourselves and Christ, whose brethren we are declared to be, and joint heirs with him in a future state, and has protected, provided for, and instructed us with a paternal love, infinitely exceeding that, which any human father has for his offspring. The word 'begotten' is also frequently used figuratively, and applied in like manner

both to Christ and other men: for instance, in the epistle of Paul to Philemon, ver. 10, where the apostle calls Onesimus his "son, whom he had begotten in his bonds;" and in 1 Peter, i. 3, where that apostle blesses "the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who, (he says) according to his great mercy, hath begotten us again to a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead."

You state, that when you urged, that the Jews accused Christ of blasphemy, for saying that he was the son of God, you did not mean to assert, that the mere word 'blasphemy' shewed they considered the term 'son' of God' to mean one truly divine; but that their own interpretation of the charge shewed, that they took the word in the highest sense, - "thou being a man makest thyself equal with God." I cannot by any means admit this, and for the best possible reason, namely, that our Lord himself, whom I prefer to every other commentator, demonstrates by his reply, that he did not consider them as having put this construction upon his words; but merely as having supposed, without foundation, that he made himself a God, in the inferior sense of the word; for he replies, "Is it not written in your law, I said ye are Gods? If he called those Gods, to whom the word of God came, and the Scripture cannot be broken, say ye of him whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest, because I said I was the son of God?" The meaning of which, as I have observed already, is

plainly this: If I had said I was God, or a God, the prophets of old, to whom the word of God came, were so called: but you are mistaken; I said no such thing, but merely that I was the son of God; and do ye stone me for this?—If you can suppose him to have considered them, as having rightly understood him to have meant by the words "I and my Father are one (¿)," that he only thereby denoted himself to be the son of God,—which he declares to have been his meaning,—still his reply clearly shews, that he did not think, that when they imagined, from his using these words, and meaning by them that he was the son of God, he made himself God, or a God, they thereby considered him as making himself equal to, or as one being with, Jehovah The most High; for in that case he could never have replied in his own justification, that the prophets were called Gods; it being universally agreed that they were never called so in any such sense as this, and consequently their objection would, uponthat supposition, have remained in its full force, without any adequate answer to it. It should be remarked, too, that when he shews them, that by saving 'he and his Father were one,' he only designed to represent himself as the son of God; and the context, taken altogether, proves that nothing like equality or unity of being could be intended; the unity of which he had spoken could only have been an unity of design, and intention, with his Father, whose will, and not his own, he had come to do in all things.

Your conception of the sense of this passage appears to proceed partly upon the supposition, that the Jews, to have charged our Lordwith having been guilty of blasphemy deserving of death, must have thought he made himself equal with God (to use your own expression): but it is undeniable, that it is not at all necessary to make this supposition; for Naboth was adjudged to be guilty of blasphemy deserving of death, upon the false charge that he had blasphemed God and the king, though no one ever supposed, that he intended to make himself equal to either; and our Saviour was held by the high-priest to have been guilty of blasphemy worthy of death, because he had informed him that he was the Christ, the son of the Blessed, and that hereafter they would see him, the son of man, sitting on the right hand of power, and coming with the clouds of Heaven. (Mark xiv. 61, &c.) In this there is no allusion at all to any equality with God, but rather the contrary; for he at whose right hand, or left hand, others have the honour to sit, is always considered the principal, and superior. So it is said in the same evangelist, (chap. xvi. 19,) that our Lord was taken up into heaven, and sat at the right hand of God; which would be an extraordinary expression upon the trinitarian scheme, as it would be declaring, either that he sat at his own right hand, or that he was not God. Why are we without any necessity to raise and encounter all these difficulties and absurdities? Upon the unitarian system there is

nothing difficult in it. Whether our Saviour be represented as sitting on the right hand of power, on the right hand of God, or on the right hand of the Father, the whole is perfectly clear, rational, and intelligible. Moreover, it does not appear, that the Jews at any time had the least conception, that the Messiah was to be equal to Jehovah their God: Moses declared that the Messiah should be a prophet like himself, whom the Lord their God should raise up unto them from the midst of them of their brethren; and at the time of our Lord's coming, they all thought, that he was to be a great conquering prince, whose kingdom was to be of this world, and who was to deliver them out of the hands of the Romans, -and had no idea of his spiritual kingdom; an error which was not corrected till after his resurrection, even amongst his own disciples, and continued to prevail amongst the rest of his countrymen who were not converted to Christianity, till the destruction of Jerusalem, and their final dispersion by the Roman power.

In short, there is not a particle of evidence to be found in the Scriptures, that the Jews expected their Messiah to be equal to God. The word 'son of God' does not imply equality; but on the contrary, and particularly according to the ideas of the Eastern nations, inferiority and subjection: and our Lord himself, with great modesty and humility, used to be frequently inculcating his own inferiority to, and entire dependence upon, the Father, by expressly declaring,

that of himself he could do nothing; that his Father who dwelt in him did the works; that his Father was greater than himself; that to sit on his right hand, and on his left, was not his to give; that he knew not the day of judgement (Mark xiii. 32). And if any one should be weak enough to suppose, (though according to the trinitarian hypothesis his divine and human nature were so united, as to constitute one and the same person,) that nevertheless there is a complete union, and yet no proper union at all; so that the one nature might know what the other nature was quite ignorant of, and the human nature might not have been intrusted by the divine nature with this great secret; which is in fact not only the most ridiculous of all subterfuges, but is also quite unworthy of the character of our blessed Lord, in whose mouth there was no guile,—he takes away all pretence for such a forced, and unnatural construction of his words, by adding, that his Father ONLY knew of that day (Matt. xxiv. 36): thereby excluding from all knowledge of the day of judgement both his own divine nature, (supposing he had any such,) and also the Holy Ghost, supposing the latter to be a person.

I am aware, that a very learned and ingenious trinitarian writer of the present day has attempted to explain this text, with a view to prevent the fatal effect which it obviously has upon the trinitarian system; in which it seems to me, that it is impossible to read what he says with ordinary attention, without being

convinced, that he has totally failed. He appears himself to have been fully sensible of the difficulty he had to encounter, and tells us that it is a solitary text; but considers it probable (for he expresses himself very tenderly upon the subject) that the ignorance of which our Lord speaks was not absolute; but that he spoke in his official capacity; and that this was not amongst the things communicated to him as the commissioned messenger of the Father. Afternoticing a very unsatisfactory interpretation of Dr. Macknight, (which he disapproves of,) he says, "Would it not be simpler to say at once, that not to know, signifies not to have official commission to make known?" He says "that the Son did not know the day in this way. He knew it not in his official capacity as the commissioned ambassador of Heaven to men. It formed no part of the divine communications to him in this character." This view, he says, "had always appeared to him to be much more rational and satisfactory than that which is commonly given, -that he was ignorant of it in his human nature, although he knew it in his divine nature:" a mode of explanation with which, he candidly admits, he had never been well satisfied. But will such of his attentive readers, as are disposed to think for themselves, feel satisfied with either, or think either the one or the other, to be at all satisfactory? The learned writer's own mode of explanation may appear to himself to be extremely plausible, but unfortunately it will not bear the touch of

Ithuriel's spear; for on applying to it one of the plainest, and most obvious, of all, critical tests, namely, that of putting the words he makes use of, instead of those used by our Saviour, into the text, and considering how the whole passage will read with them, the true and genuine features of the author's new mode of explanation will start up immediately. Doing this, the passage will read as follows: "But of that day, and that hour, no one hath an official commission to make them known, no not the angels which are in heaven, neither the son, but my Father only." According to this reading the Father would, for the first time, be represented as commissioned; and we should naturally feel the utmost anxiety to be informed by what superior, that greatest, wisest, and most excellent of beings, whose name is not to be pronounced without the most profound awe and reverence, who is original, self-existent, is over all, above all, and in us all, the only true God, to whom we are indebted for sending his son Jesus Christ to deliver us from sin and death, could by any possibility be supposed, for one moment. by any of his erring creatures, to have been commissioned. This would be a discovery most marvellous, most wonderful, reserved for the nineteenth century, and for a protestant divine. At the very first glance. we perceive it to be big with absurdity. The learned writer perhaps will contend, that the words may be aken in different senses, as applied to different members of the same sentence; and that as applied to the

Father, it must be understood that he did know the day of judgement, originally, and absolutely. But this will not answer his purpose; for upon this construction the Holy Ghöst stands excluded from that knowledge, as well as the supposed divine Logos.—Thus fares this new way of arriving at simplicity, by mixing up together ingredients of heterogeneous, and discordant natures; of explaining not only without, but against all authority the word 'knoweth' (oider), -which is a single word, conveying a plain and simple meaning, which every one instantly understands,-by introducing the long and complex circumlocution of having a commission to make known, which gives a meaning totally different, a meaning which no one annexes to the word actually employed. He afterwards proceeds to state more directly, that the Son did not know the day of judgement in his official character, as the commissioned ambassador of Heaven to men. that it formed no part of the divine communications to him in that character; -as if this could be our blessed Lord's meaning, when he said positively, that he did not know it; a mode of construction which might have been expected from some of the ancient Popish writers in the tenth or the eleventh century, when equivocation and mental reservation were considered lawful and right to effect good purposes; but which is unworthy of the age in which we live, and of the chalracter of our blessed Lord, whose followers we are, degrading him to a supposed resemblance with a mere

diplomatist, a character which has never been thought very favourably of in any age for sincerity and plain dealing. Should it be held, however, that persons of this description are licensed sometimes to do, and say, what honest men, in other classes of society, would be disgraced by, I am much inclined to think notwithstanding, that if an ambassador in the present day were voluntarily, and deliberately, to affirm that he did not know a thing, which it should afterwards clearly appear he did know, his reputation would not stand very high afterwards, and would be in still worse odour, if he should attempt to excuse himself by saying, that he did not know it in his official character. In the present instance there does not seem to have been any occasion, any motive whatever, for our Lord to say he did not know it, if he did. It would have been quite sufficient for him to have said, That day is a secret, which you are not at present to be informed of. In no part of his conduct is there any appearance of this double dealing, of expressing himself absolutely, and at the same time meaning to speak, sometimes in one character, and sometimes in another, without informing his hearers in which, or even intimating that heappeared in two characters, or was addressing them in a particular character only, that is, in a different sense from that which his words imported. This is nearly the same thing as the supposition that he spoke of himself in his supposed different natures, and sometimes is to be understood as speaking of himself in

his human nature, and sometimes in his divine nature, without ever informing us in which, but leaving us to find it out in the best manner we can. But if he ever in reality spoke of himself by parts, or in different natures, in this very extraordinary way, -how is it, that when he speaks of doing things, which his human nature could not perform, he never alludes to his divine nature? If both were united in him, and both necessary to enable him to perform certain parts of his mission, it was as natural for him to speak of the one as of the other; and more particularly to speak of the divine nature, when the subject matter was such, as to be beyond the powers of the human nature: but we never meet with a single instance of this kind. On the contrary, he invariably ascribes all his miraculous works to the power of the Father, and the divine nature appears to have done nothing whatever. What then was its use, and what was there done which the power of the Father only, dwelling in the human nature, could not, and did not, actually accomplish?

The trinitarians say, that a mere man could not execute the office of universal judge at the day of judgement—and in this the unitarians agree with them; but the former are inclined to go one step further, and to suppose, that a man qualified and assisted by the Father could not execute it. If this be the case, it must be the supposed divine nature of Jesus Christ, that will qualify and enable him to perform this mighty work;

and it would be natural to allude to it for this purpose, whenever the subject was started; but no such thing ever appears. On the contrary, his human nature, and his human nature only, is alluded to on this occasion. It is never said that he is appointed to this office, because he has a divine nature, because he is the divine Logos, or because he is the second person in the Trinity; but, as he says himself, because he is the son of man: and the apostle Paul says, (Acts xvii. 30,31,) that "God hath appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness, by that man whom he hath ordained, whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead;" speaking of him as one who had been a man, a mortal man, who like other men had died, and who, though then raised from the dead, was still a man, though in a glorified state: and not alluding, in the most distant manner, to his being any thing more.

The learned writer I have lately mentioned invites his readers to apply, if they think fit, the words 'absurd' and 'impossible' to the doctrine that God could make our Lord, supposing him to have been a man like ourselves, the future judge of the whole human race. The learned writer was too wary a polemic to make the assertion himself in direct terms, and therefore only insinuates it; but as it is possible that some one may feel disposed to accept the invitation which his ingenious author has so cautiously held out, and,

with a more adventurous spirit, hazard the assertion, that the almighty God cannot qualify one of his creatures to perform the office of supreme judge, upon this great occasion, because, as he conceives, it would be necessary for him to be acquainted with all their thoughts, words, and actions, together with all the springs, motives, and circumstances which have influenced them,—I shall take the liberty of making a few observations upon this subject, as these considerations may be thought calculated at first view to make some impression, at least upon those who have not been accustomed to such speculations.

It is a common thing for writers of this description to allege, that a mere man cannot do this, and a mere man cannot do that; but they well know that this is not the true question,—but what God, who is omnipotent and omniscient, can empower and enable one of the human race to perform. A mere man, we well know, cannot raise the dead; and yet both Elijah and Elisha, when commissioned, and enabled, by the Most High, did this under the old dispensation; and both Peter and Paul, under the new. A mere man cannot know the heart, or the thoughts, of any other man; and yet one of the highly-favoured prophets whom I have just mentioned, was empowered to know the heart, and the thoughts, of his servant Gehazi, when at a distance from him; and also to know whatever the king of Syria did, even in his bedchamber. The same great Being who thus enabled

him to know the thoughts of one or two persons, could unquestionably have enabled him to know the thoughts of as many others as he pleased; nay, if such was his sovereign will, of the whole human race. However some may be startled at this upon the first view, yet the denial of it would amount to nothing less, than prescribing bounds to Omnipotence, and limiting the Holy One of Israel. It would be reviving the old cry of unbelief-"Can God furnish a table in the wilderness? Can he give bread also? Can he provide flesh for his people?" Psalm lxxviii. 19, 20. What we are here to consider is, whether the Almighty God can empower, and enable, the blessed Jesus, in a glorified state, with his mental powers enlarged and improved beyond all that the utmost stretch of the human intellect in this present infant and imperfect state can form a conception of, to know the thoughts. and read the hearts, and past actions, of the whole human race, if this should be necessary to qualify him to pass sentence upon every one of them, either at the same time, or within a given space of longer or shorter duration, as shall appear to his the Father's infinite wisdom to be for the best. This power, vast and extraordinary as it may appear, would be still finite, and, in comparison with Omnipotence and Omniscience, not equal to a grain of sand, compared to the entire globe of the earth.

The number of men who have already existed, and who will probably be called into existence hereafter,

in this sublunary world, before the final consummation of all things, is, it is true, so vast, as at first view almost to overwhelm the minds of finite and shortsighted mortals, and to make them, before they recover from their astonishment, and take a cooler, and more comprehensive, survey of the subject, almost ready to accede to the learned author's invitation, and to pronounce at once, that it would be affirming what is absurd and impossible, to say, that even Omnipotence and Omniscience itself could reveal to one born of a woman, or even to any created and finite being, all the thoughts, words, and actions, together with all the springs, motives, and circumstances which have influenced them, in all their endless, as he is pleased to term them, combinations, so as to qualify him to judge, and pass sentence upon, them all, according to what they have done in the body; and that nothing short of infinite knowledge is necessary for this purpose, which we can never suppose to be communicated to a creature himself finite. But when the impression made by the magnitude of the number, which however great is still finite, has a little worn off, and we begin to consider the nature of that great Being, (whose powerwewere almost rash enough to limit,) the immensity of his works, and the wonders of his ways; when we consider the heavens which are the work of his fingers, the moon and the stars which he has ordained, we cannot help trembling at the thought of setting bounds to his wisdom or his power, or of com-

paring with the infinity of his knowledge, that exceedingly small, and finite portion of it, which would be necessary to qualify our blessed Lord for the duties of the office in question, great and multifarious as they must necessarily be, and which he can with ease communicate to him, either all at the same time, or in succession, with inconceivable rapidity, for the full performance of them, either within the compass of a day, or in any shorter or longer time, which his sovereign wisdom may have determined upon, as most fit and proper. If we extend our views no further than to our own solar system, or to the sun itself, which is in the centre of it; his magnitude, as being about a million of times larger than the globe on which we dwell; fills our minds with wonder, and sinks our own world into comparative insignificance. Shall we say, then, that the mighty Architect, who made this glorious luminary, cannot qualify one of his creatures to govern, or judge, the inhabitants of an exceedingly small part of one of the innumerable provinces of his vast dominions, not exceeding in size one millionth part of this resplendent sphere? But our minds may take a still wider range, and contemplate that endless profusion of similarly great and glorious orbs of light, which fill the heavens around us, one of the nearest of which, namely the fixed star Arcturus,—if the observations recently made upon it by a learned professor of the present day are any thing like correct, and if they are not, it is because it is still

more distant, -is at the enormous distance of twenty millions of millions and sixty thousands of millions of miles from us; a distance so vast, that a cannon-ball, preserving all its original velocity, would be about five millions of years reaching it. Who will take upon him to affirm, that this immense space is a mere vacuum? The majority of philosophers, or at least a considerable number of them, have, I apprehend, thought the contrary; and with whatever substance it may be filled, beings may be formed by almighty power, capable of enjoying in it life and happiness: every mile of it may be inhabited by ethereal beings, untangible by mortal touch, invisible to mortal eye, as fully, and completely, as any mile upon the surface of the earth. Even our atmosphere, which is much more extensive than the earth and sea, may, for any thing we know to the contrary, be similarly peopled: As the poet says, "Millions of spiritual creatures may walk the earth unseen, both when we wake, and when we sleep," all having their respective limits, and incapable of interfering with, or of being conscious of, the presence of each other, by fixed laws of their nature, which cannot be altered, but by the interposition of that Almighty Power which prescribed, and can suspend, or vary, their operation:—as when the servant of Elisha the prophet beheld the city in which they were, surrounded by the armies, and by the horses, and chariots, of the king of Syria, and upon expressing his apprehensions to his master, was answered, "Fear not,

for they that be with us, are more than they that be with them. And Elisha prayed, and said, Lord, I pray thee open his eyes that he may see; and the Lord opened the eyes of the young man, and he saw; and behold the mountain was full of horses, and chariots of fire, round about Elisha." 2 Kings, vi. 15, 16. When we reflect that there are other stars of the same description with that which I have just mentioned, according to all appearance innumerable, all perhaps equally remote from each other, and multitudes of them, I had almost said infinitely more distant from us, and each probably giving light, and heat, to other systems, as extensive and glorious as our own, the human intellect sinks at once, and acknowledges with the profoundest humility, veneration, and awe, that the entire globe which we inhabit, and all that it contains, which our own littleness prompts us to call great, are not in comparison what a drop of water is to the ocean. When we look downwards too, -for the works of our God are as wonderful in the little world as in the great, -and consider that every drop of that ocean teems with life, and, as well as all the other parts of nature, is full of countless multitudes of his creatures, enjoying their different measures of being, and of happiness, according to his wise and benevolent appointment; how difficult would it be to forbear, even if we were desirous of it, from concluding his works to belike himself-INFINITE; extending through all the boundless regions of space, without number,

without measure, and without termination! Shall we say then, as we are invited to do by this writer \*, that the Almighty, omniscient, and infinite, author of all, cannot qualify a finite being, one of the human race in an exalted and glorified state, and endued with enlarged faculties and powers, to judge a finite, and inconceivably small, proportion of the inhabitants of this diminutive speck, which is in itself an inconceivably small proportion of his immense dominions? The learned writer's statement, that if we do not consider a being invested with this power to be infinite, we cannot prove the Deity to be so, is any thing but correct: for in the one case we can see no bounds, no limits, no superior; in the other, all is delegated, limited, inferior, and finite. This seems to be a most extraordinary specimen of logic, which, however it may for a moment have misled the learned writer, is not at all likely, I should conceive, to be adopted as legitimate, by any impartial, and attentive, reader.

Having shewn, as it appears to me, satisfactorily, that there is nothing absurd, or impossible, or improbable, in the position, that God will, as he has declared, judge all mankind by the man whom he hath ordained for that purpose, supposing him to be nothing more, than a highly-glorified individual of the human race, endued with supereminent knowledge and power, conferred upon him by the Almighty Sovereign and Lord of all, to qualify him for the impor-

Restablica & Contract Mr. Wardlaw.

tant office to which he is destined,—even upon the supposition that he is to exercise it alone,—I should, if I had an opportunity, ask the learned writer whether, after all, he is certain, that our blessed Lord, though appearing in the character of supreme judge upon this great occasion, may not be assisted by others acting by his direction, and under his superintendance, and control, all of them eminently qualified for the situations they are to fill, and enabled, by the communication of power from on high, to exercise their respective offices with every requisite degree of information and ability? May he not be aided by hundreds, perhaps by thousands, possibly by millions, acting in this manner under him, to accomplish the mighty work? We have it in his own words, that his apostles shall hereafter sit on twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel. Matt. xix. 28. We are informed also by the apostle Paul, 1 Cor. vi. 2, that the saints shall judge the world: and though the learned writer in question can scarcely think it possible, that our blessed Lord, unless he is infinite, can judge ordinary men, the same apostle asks his Corinthian disciples, whether they do not know, that they shall judge angels; (Ib. ver. 3.) meaning, perhaps, some of the messengers of God, who lived under the ancient dispensation. May not this be one of the reasons, why the dead in Christ are to rise first,—that a competent number of them, having been previously judged themselves by our Lord, may be qualified and appointed to act under him, in judging the world at large? and after this awful and stupendous task shall have been fully accomplished, may not our blessed Lord,

approving of all that has been done, proceed to make the final separation between the righteous and the wicked; and after having placed the former at his right hand, and the latter at his left, acting in the high character of supreme, and universal judge, to which his father has elevated him, pronounce the general and irrevocable sentence, saying unto the righteous, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom which was prepared for you from the foundation of the world;" and to the wicked, "Depart from me, ye accursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels \*?"

The learned writer says that this text (Matthew xxiv. 36) is a solitary text; but its being solitary (if it were so) would not destroy its force, when we consider upon what high authority it stands; that it is uncontradicted and undisputed; and that its words are as express, and clear, as any in the sacred writings: but in negativing the omniscience of our blessed Lord, and of the Holy Ghost considered as a person, it is only

<sup>\*</sup> The Author trusts that he shall not be thought to entertain such unworthy notions of the character and attributes of that transcendently glorious and infinitely merciful and gracious being, who is love itself, the Father of all mercies, and God of all consolation, whose anger endureth but for a moment, and whose loving kindnesses and tender mercies are over all his works, as to have intended, by irrevocable sentence, any thing more, than a sentence, which being once pronounced, will certainly be carried into effect: or that by the everlusting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels, he understands punishment, which is, in the strict modern see se of the word, to be eternal, and never to have an end. He considers all punishment to be remedial, and therefore believes that, however long, and however intense, and dreadful, it may be, it will, when it shall have accomplished its purpose, cease. He knows that the word rendered everlusting, is in scripture frequently employed to denote spaces of very long, and indefinite duration, some of which have actually ended, and others we are informed will also arrive at their respective terminations, at some distant, though unknown periods.

solitary, as furnishing this particular proof of it, which is not given elsewhere: but the learned writer ought to recollect, that the omniscience of both is in effect equally negatived; and upon the same authority, in John xvii. 3, where our Lord, in conformity with his previous language in the tenth chapter of the same evangelist, (shewing that he did not claim to be God at all, but only the Son of God,) says, in his prayer to the Father for his disciples, "And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent:" thereby expressly affirming the Father, and the Father only, to be the true God, and excluding both himself, and the Holy Ghost, from any participation in the Godhead; which, as omniscience, as well as omnipotence, and omnipresence, are essential attributes of true Deity, and of true Deity only, negatives the possession of omniscience, omnipotence, or omnipresence, by either of them. I have no conception, my dear Sir, how it is possible, in the face of this text, that your opinion, that our Lord claims true Deity, can be maintained for a moment. To this may be added, if necessary, another text equally conclusive, which, if any one should say, that it does not rest upon the same authority, must be allowed by all, to rank the very next in order to it, and to be at all events infinitely superior to that of all the fathers, councils, and synods, put together: I mean, 1 Cor. viii. 4-6, where the apostle Paul says, "We know that an idol is nothing in the world, and that there is none other God but one; for though there be that are called gods, (as there be gods many, and lords many,) but unto us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord, Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we in him." Here the apostle declares to us, that there is but one God, and informs us who he is; namely, the Father; and that there is but one Lord, or master; and also informs us who he is, namely, Christ; excluding from the Godhead, (as he our Lord and master had himself done,) both Christ, and the Holy Ghost; and affirming, that the Father was that one God; which is exactly the same as saying in the words of our blessed Lord, that the Father was the only God, or the only true God; which is the same thing. Now if the Father be the only true God, as our Lord declares; if there is but one God, and that one God is the Father, as the apostle Paul declares, it follows as clearly as if written with a sun-beam, that neither our blessed Lord, nor the Holy Spirit, (that is, the Trinitarian Holy Spirit considered as a distinct person,) can be God; and that neither the one, nor the other, can be possessed of omnipotence, omniscience, or omnipresence, which are the essential attributes of God, and of God only.

It is of the greatest consequence to remark likewise in this place, that neither our Lord, in either of the texts quoted from St. John, nor the apostle Paul, in that quoted from 'the first epistle to the Corinthians, can possibly be practising the double dealing, which has been so unjustly imputed to the former, of speaking of himself generally, as an entire person, and yet, without any notice or intimation of it to his hearers, saying, what he knew was only applicable to one of his two supposed natures; for the language used in all three of these passages would as effectually exclude his

divine nature, if he had any such, and also the Holy Ghost, if considered to be a person, as his human nature. It being impossible therefore to impute to him, or to the apostle, any such double dealing in either of the three texts in question, why should he, without any proof or presumption, be supposed to have practised it upon other occasions where his words are clear and manifest, and there is no allusion whatever to any second nature? as in John xiv. 28, "If ye loved me ye would rejoice, because I said I go unto the Father, for my Father is greater than I;" and the like. If the Trinitarian, misled by an ardent though honest zeal for his system, which cannot stand without adopting this interpretation, objectionable as it is in itself, and destitute as it is of all authority, can make up his mind to embrace it, he must excuse the Unitarian, who, in the equallyhonest exercise of his judgment, has arrived at the opposite conclusion, from following his example.

In answer to my quotation from John xvii. 11, to shew that our Lord did not intend to assert any unity of nature with the Father, because he prayed that his disciples might be one, as he and his father were; you take it for granted I shall admit, that this expression in many places means not equality, but humble imitation of a grand model. I admit most readily, that it does not any where mean equality with God; but I am not aware of any places where it is used to denote humble initation of a grand model, though possibly there may be such. The text you cite, "Be ye

perfect, as your Father in heaven is perfect," appears to me to be not at all in point; for when we exhortone person to be perfect, as another is perfect, whether the latter be understood to be God or man, we obviously mean, that the former is inferior to, and less perfect than, the latter: but when we desire that A may be one with B, the only object of our wish is, that he may unite with, or join him; and there is nothing in the expression itself indicative either of equality, or inferiority; for one person may join, or unite with, another person who is his equal, for the accomplishment of some great purpose, which they both have in view, as he may with another who is his superior, for the like purpose; for which reason, if there be nothing else to shew, that one of them is superior to the other, the expression of itself proves nothing. But if we concede for a moment that it means an humble imitation of a grand model, applying your own standard in both instances, it will follow, that Christ's being one with his Father implied his humble imitation of the Father as his grand model; and consequently his inferiority to the model he proposed to himself for his imitation, and that he prayed that his disciples, who were inferior to him, might imitate him as theirs, in like manner.

If to the eleventh verse, which I quoted before, you will have the goodness to add the twentieth, twenty-first, and twenty-second verses of the same chapter, they will still more strongly illustrate the nature of

Christ's union with the Father. In these verses our Lord prays, that not only his immediate followers, but that all who might be converted by their means, might be one; that as his Father was in him, and he in his Father, they also might he one in his Father, and himself; and for this purpose, that the world might believe, that the Father had sent him, that is, might believe his Gospel; meaning, (as it appears to me,) that all should be one, or united, in publishing the joyful tidings of the Gospel to the world. Then he says, that the very same glory which the Father had given him, (meaning, I conceive, the glory of preaching and spreading the Gospel, or the good tidings of the Father's gracious designs towards mankind;) that very same glory he had delegated to them; that they might be one;—that is, united in this great work,—as he and his Father were one, or united in the same work; for it is the very same union that is ascribed to both. From the whole taken together, the meaning seems to me to shine forth with unclouded lustre, and to be hardly capable of being mistaken.

I cannot discover in the Scriptures any proof of an union between the Father and the Son, which springs (as you term it) from identity of substance; and you have not cited any authorities for this kind of union. To the best of my remembrance, there is not in the whole compass of the sacred writings, any thing like identity of substance between them, asserted or alluded to. This notion came into the Church, I believe,

from another source. You will find plentiful mention of it in the writings of the Greek, and Latin fathers, and in the creeds which were fabricated by them, and their brethren. It would not have been omitted in the Scriptures, if the inspired writers of those documents had known any thing about it.

I am still of opinion, that the eighteenth verse of the chapter of St. John which I have last quoted. means, that Christ was sent into the world by his Father, as the disciples were sent into the world by him. Such is the plain meaning of the words, without alteration or addition; and the interpretation you have put upon them appears to me to be totally inadmissible; for I can by no means agree with you, that mere resemblance in some points was meant, but that in the most material thing of all, no resemblance whatever was intended; but on the contrary an essential difference, namely, that Christ was sent from another world; which without proof, and in the teeth of the direct and natural import of the words, I cannot, with any colour of sound criticism, any more credit than that his disciples were, the very same words being equally applied to both. To make them speak a different language, you have been obliged to add many words to them by way of explanation, stating, that they (the disciples) were sent out into the world on a mission of benevolence, as Christ was sent into this world from another;—thus making the whole resemblance to consist in the addition you have made,

of their both being sent on a mission of benevolence, and inferring a difference where none was intended, founded upon similar additions, namely, that the former were sent out into the world; whereas Christ, you add, was sent into this world from another. But, my dear Sir, you will acknowledge that this is mere assertion, and cannot safely be received without proof; that by taking similar liberties with any author, we may make him speak whatever sentiments we please: but they will, after all, be our doctrines, and not his. According to the words of our Saviour, who states his position with great simplicity and clearness, both were sent into the world; and as his Father sent him into the world, so he sent his disciples into the world. Nothing can be more plain, and the difficulty is to raise any doubt at all upon their construction in this respect.

If it be asked, what is meant by 'the world,' into which both were sent, it will not be necessary to go far, to prove that the men of that age, and country, were intended to be denoted by it, and not the material world, which they occupied but a very small part of. This also, according to every day's practice, is the common interpretation that every one, learned and unlearned, puts upon similar expressions, when used in common conversation. But to shew it from the Scriptures themselves, I shall refer to the twenty-fifth verse of this very chapter, where our Saviour says, "Holy Father, the world hath not known thee:" See also John vii. 4, where it is said, "If thou do

these things, shew thyself to the world." Again, ver. 7, "The world cannot hate you, but me it hateth;" meaning manifestly in all three places, the men of the age, and country, in which our great master delivered his heavenly precepts.

Having shewn, that Christ was sent into the world by the Father, as the disciples were sent into the world by him; namely, by being sent among mankind with a divine commission to preach the Gospel, when he says, John xvi. 28, "I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world: again, I leave the world, and go to the Father;" which you lastly quote, as favouring your explanation of the former words, to shew that he was sent from another state of being into this, upon the ground that all admit, that ne has gone from this state into another; I conceive that I have much stronger reasons for interpreting the latter passage by the former, than can be assigned for interpreting the former by the latter, in the manner you have attempted to explain them. I shall begin with the first member of the sentence, "I am come forth from the Father, and am come into the world." If by this he meant, (as I contend, and think I have successfully shewn,) that our Lord, having been admitted to the knowledge of the divine counsels, was sent forth amongst mankind to declare them, -as his disciples, having been admitted to the knowledge of his counsels and designs, were sent forth by him among mankind to declare them in like manner on their part,-both passages harmonize completely, and both

will also be found in unison with John i. 6: "There was a man sent from God, whose name was John:" meaning, evidently, that John having had a communication with the Supreme Being, was sent with a divine commission to mankind; not that he came from another world. You will find, that a very learned and eminent Trinitarian, Dr. Doddridge, together with other commentators, interprets 'ascending up into heaven' to mean, becoming acquainted with the divine counsels, and not the going up into another world. After making these observations, I think myself well warranted in contending, that our Saviour's leaving the world and going to the Father, in the passage in question, could not have been designed to be taken in the same sense as his coming, or that he was to go in the same manner as he came, which was manifestly not the case, he being to leave the world in a totally different manner; that is to say, by death, in which sense every good man may be said to go to God: and yet if it had been said of John, that he was a man sent from God, and that he afterwards died and went to God, no one would. I believe, have inferred that John had been sent out of another world into this; or in other words, that he had pre-existed. The concluding part of the verse therefore must be taken to have been inserted for the purpose of communicating, by way of additional information, what was shortly to happen to him, without intending to represent any resemblance between his coming and going.

To shew how fallacious an interpretation may be founded upon the supposition, that because he was to go to the Father into another world by death, and a subsequent resurrection and ascension, therefore he must have come forth from the Father, and come into the world from some other world, (as if God were not every where, and as if he could not in this world have been admitted into his presence, and have come forth from him again in common parlance, as was the case both with Moses, and with John, before him,)-I shall just ask, why, if the parallel be necessary and proper in one of these instances, it is not so in all? and why is it not to be followed up to its full extent? why is it not to be inferred, that he came from God into this world, in consequence of a previous death and resurrection in another, as he was to go unto him in consequence of a previous death and resurrection in this? But I am afraid we shall make wild work, if, when coming, and going, are mentioned in the same passage, we were without further inquiry, to infer, that the party must come, and go, in the same manner, and from, and to, the same place. It would be easy to produce passages in Scripture, where this mode of reasoning would have a curious effect: See Job i. 21, "Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither." See also Eccl. xii. 7, "Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was, and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it." Nevertheless, though the word 'return,' which is a strong term, is made use of, no one

supposes, that the spirit of man pre-existed, and came forth from God out of another world, least of all will the Trinitarian grant, that it returns to him as it came from him, that is, into a state of non-existence. So much for John xvi. 28. But after all, whatever might have been its meaning, it is not a parallel passage with John xvii. 18, and therefore not in point; for the latter states a resemblance in express terms between the sending of our Saviour into the world, and his sending his disciples into it; the words being "As thou," meaning the Father, "hast sent me into the world, even so, have I also, sent them into the world:" whereas, in John xvi. 28, it is not "As I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world, so I leave the world and go to the Father;" but merely, I do the one and I do the other; and the manner in which the one, and the other, actually took place, which were totally different, shews, that as no resemblance was expressed, so none was intended.

This leads me to consider John v. 22, 23, "For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son; that all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father. He that honoureth not the Son, honoureth not the Father which hath sent him." This passage, amongst others, has been quoted to prove the equality of the Son with the Father; but will be found by whoever attentively considers it, to be one of those which prove the contrary; for what is the reason, and the only reason, assigned by our blessed Lord for men's honouring him, even as they honour the Father? Is it because he was

equal to the Father? No such thing; but merely because the Father had committed all judgment to him; which shews,—1st, that he was appointed to this high office, that men should so honour him; which implies, that if he had not been appointed to it mankind would not have been required so to do, and would not have done it; -2dly, that the Son had not originally in himself the power of judging men, but that it was delegated to him by the Father, and by the Father only, nothing being said of the Holy Ghost having joined in the commission; that until he was invested with it, he was not entitled to be honoured as the Father was honoured; that being assigned as the reason, and the sole reason, for his being so honoured, and that his being thus honoured, was in the character of universal judge of mankind, as representing his Father, by whom he had been appointed to that office, which is confirmed by the following words: "He that honoureth not the Son, honoureth not the Father, who hath sent him;" referring in like manner to his mission by the Father, as the reason why he who honoured him not, honoured not the Father; inasmuch as he was the Father's messenger, and represented him. The whole is perfectly clear, except upon trinitarian principles; and he that runs may read. The difficulty is to explain the passage at all upon those principles. We have always been accustomed to consider judges, as entitled in that character to be honoured as the sovereign they represent, and their judgments to be treated with the same respect, as if they had been pronounced by the sovereign himself; but notwith-

standing this, no one considers the judge, who is thus appointed, to be equal to the sovereign, who has appointed him. It is impossible to throw stronger light upon this subject, than is done in the twenty-sixth and twenty-seventh verses of the same chapter: "For as the Father hath life in himself, so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself; and hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the son of man." Here again we perceive, that the Son had not originally and inherently, life in himself, but it was given to him by the Father; nor had he originally, authority to execute judgment, but this also was his Father's gift; from which it is plain, that the Father is represented as the great fountain of life, and power, which emanate from him alone, and are bestowed upon those to whom he thinks fit to impart them, of whom our blessed Lord represents himself to be one of the most highly favoured. There is not the most distant hint of another person called the Holy Ghost, having originally possessed either life, or power, or having joined in bestowing them upon the Son. All is stated to have proceeded from the Father only, and there is no indication of any thing like equality, or reciprocity, between them; but, on the contrary, the whole exhibits a representation of two persons standing in the relative situations of superior and inferior, of giver and receiver, of principal and agent. The state of the city of o

You remark, that "you have arrived at the end of your paper without urging those evidences of the deity of Christ which arise from the ascription to him

of every name, title, attribute, work, and honour, of deity." Now really, my dear sir, I must say, that I cannot find any where, that all these things have been ascribed to him, greatly as he has been honoured and exalted by his Father and our Father, by his God and our God. Where is he ever declared to have originally, and inherently, life or power in himself? Is he any where represented as having either, except by communication from, and as the gift of, his Father? Can he be said to have all the attributes of deity ascribed to him, when one of the most essential of them, namely omniscience, is denied to him, upon no less authority than his own, by his expressly declaring that he did not know the day of judgment, and that no one knew it, but his Father only? when his possession of another equally essential attribute of deity, that is to say omnipotence, is likewise negatived upon the same authority: "I can of mine own self do nothing:" John v. 30.? Is any thing like this ever said of the Father? And again, Luke xx. 23: "To sit on my right hand, and on my left, is not mine to give; but it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared by my Father; not by the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, nor by the Trinity, a term not to be found at all in the Scriptures, nor by God, which, it would have been pretended, included all the three persons who have been supposed to constitute the Godhead; but by the Father. Lastly, when it is fully and expressly stated, that his kingdom, and by consequence the authority and power connected with it, are not to be eternal; it being declared in the clearest and most explicit terms

by the apostle Paul, that this his kingdom, long as it is to last, and glorious as it is to be, is to have an end, when, the apostle informs us, he is to deliver it up; and does not say, to God, -which the Trinitarians perhaps might have contended, as has just been remarked, meant their three supposed persons in the Godhead, though it would have been attended with the awkwardness of averring a delivery of this kingdom by himself to himself,-neither does he say, to the Trinity, nor to the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, nor to the Father and Holy Ghost, each of whom, supposing them to be persons in the Godhead equal in power and glory, would have been equally entitled to receive it,-but to the Father only; all which things are totally inconsistent with any thing like equality, which, as it does not, nor can exist, cannot in my humble opinion, as you suppose, he essential to all our dearest hopes, nor have the slightest influence upon them. To me it appears inconceivable, how any one, after duly considering, and maturely weighing, the plain and positive declarations I have just cited, standing as they do upon the highest, and most indisputable authority, can help seeing, that it is the Father, and the Father only, who is the great author, and sovereign disposer, of all things, and that it is he, and he only, who claims, and is entitled to, the attributes of true deity.

I have already shewn how fallacious the ascription of names and titles is, to prove that the person to whom they are ascribed is God. I could greatly enlarge the list I have furnished, if it were at all necessary, and prove by this sort of reasoning, that Moses,

and various other distinguished personages under the old dispensation, were God, just as the Trinitarians prove by it, that our blessed Lord was. Arguments founded upon mere implication and inference, in which we are extremely likely to deceive ourselves, and, as every man's experience must have convinced him, do deceive ourselves frequently, are nothing against the plain declarations of Scripture. If the sacred writings had informed us, that our Lord was a partaker of the divine nature, how strongly would the Trinitarian have argued from it, as furnishing decisive evidence, both of his deity, and of his having two natures, a divine, as well as human nature! The inference, it would have been said, was irresistible; and in vain, I am afraid, would the Unitarian have contended, that even this, was no proof at all, and that, interpreting scripture by scripture, the inference was rebutted by the declaration of the apostle (2 Peter, i. 4), "That by the exceeding great and precious promises that are given to us, we also may be partakers of the divine nature." In fact, the apostle does not say that our Lord is a partaker of the divine nature, though he does happen to say, that his disciples may, by the promises, if they escape the corruption that is in the world: and I only cite the passage to shew how likely we should be to deceive ourselves, if we were to build any very important doctrine upon mere inference and implication. Our analogies in such cases sometimes fail us at every step, when we least expect it; and we ought to proceed with the utmost caution, even when there is nothing to be set against them: but when they are in direct opposition to the clear, and express, declarations of our Lord himself, and his apostles, they are lighter than vanity, and entitled to no consideration whatever. There can be no doubt, that one plain declaration, proceeding from him who cannot err, or from one authorized by him to make it, which is the same thing, is worth a thousand inferences made by his imperfect and fallible creatures, however great may be their reputation for learning, and talent, among their fellow-men, it being notorious, that some of the most distinguished have made the greatest blunders, and wandered the farthest from the truth.

Instead of making the express declarations contained in the Gospel bend to opinions founded upon mere inference and implication, and labouring to reconcile the former to the latter, we ought, I conceive, to adopt the converse of this mode of proceeding, and endeavour to construe the passages from which we deduce our inferences, in the deduction of which we may be easily mistaken, in conformity with the former, about which, unless it be in some measure our own fault, we cannot be well deceived; and if we find ourselves unable to accomplish it, to conclude that we have not yet succeeded in ascertaining their meaning. We may illustrate this by our blessed Lord's commandment respecting prayer. He says in plain, and direct, terms (Matt. vi. 6, 9), "When thou prayest, pray to thy Father, who is in secret; and after this manner pray ye, Our Father who art in heaven." Again (Luke xi. 2), "When ye pray, say Our Father," a precept which he has repeated in terms equally clear in many other places, and has left us no direction to pray to any other person;

but we have contrived to infer, contrary to another express declaration\*, from a figurative expression made use of in John x. 30, which is however explained by John xvii. 11, 21, 22, and shewn to mean no such thing—that he is equal to his Father; and from thence we draw another inference, inconsistent with the former express command, that when we pray, we are as frequently to say 'O God the Son,' and to pray to him. We think also, that we have collected by inference from other figurative passages, that there is another person called the Holy Ghost, who is equal to the Father; and from thence we arrive at the further inference, that we are also to pray to him, and when we pray, to say O God the Holy Ghost, a practice equally inconsistent with our Lord's express precept, with his own uniform example, and with the equally undisputed example of all his apostles, none of whom ever delivered to us any precept to pray to this supposed person, nor appear to have ever prayed to him, even in one solitary instance, themselves. When therefore we take upon ourselves, on no other authority, than some supposed analogies and inferences of our own, to depart from the plain and express precepts of our blessed Lord, and to say 'O God the Son, have mercy upon us,' and 'O God the Holy Ghost, have mercy upon us,' is it wonderful, that some of our fellow Christians, who are determined to obey the commandments of our Lord himself, and not to defer to the mere opinions of uninspired and fallible men like themselves, should ask us the question, "Who hath required this at your

<sup>\*</sup> John xiv. 28. "For my Father is greater than I."

hands?" and can we without trembling, upon no better authority than this, address those prayers to the Son, which that Son himself has commanded us to offer to his Father? Can we forget, that this stupendously great, and transcendently glorious, Being, to whom the Son addressed his own prayers, and required us to offer ours, is jealous of his name, and "will not give his glory to another?" Can we do otherwise,when we feel our minds duly impressed with this sentiment, and penetrated with the deepest awe, and the most profound veneration, when contemplating his greatness and perfections,—than shudder, with the plain unlettered men described by Tertullian, who he says in his time always constituted the majority of believers, at the idea of adopting any doctrine interfering with his sole sovereignty, as they did, when that ancient father, and his learned contemporaries, who were labouring, however honestly in their own opinions, to corrupt the primitive purity, and simplicity, of the Gospél, endeavoured to introduce among them an ingenious theory, somewhat, though not exactly, resembling the trinity of modern times, to which he gave the name of the economy, as well as of the trinity, or perhaps endeavoured to explain his trinity by some supposed economy in the divine nature; but which he could not persuade them to believe, did not clash with the monarchy of the Father? Is it possible we can think that we testify our love or honour for the Son, by thus disregarding his precepts, and doing that, which he never required, because a system formed by frail, and fallible, though perhaps well-meaning men, long after his death,

and the deaths of every one of his apostles, has without any authority been made to injoin it upon us? What does our Lord himself say, "If ye love me, keep my commandments." John xiv. 15. He commands us, when we pray, to address ourselves to the Father, and always gave us the example of it in his own person. We, on our parts, have thought fit, without any commandment whatever, to offer up our prayers to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost; neglecting the commandments of God, which were delivered to us by the Son himself, and making them of none effect by our traditions, and teaching for doctrines the commandments of men, thus rejecting, as our Saviour says, the commandments of God, that we may keep our own tradition. Is this the faith that was once delivered to the saints? No; that was plain and simple, requiring men only to believe, that Jesus was the Christ. Are they the doctrines inculcated in the Scriptures? In vain do we look for them there. But if any one, after having unsuccessfully searched for them in those sacred books, is desirous of knowing where they are to be met with, let him consult some of the writings of the fathers, and some of the services, creeds and catechisms, composed by philosophizing divines, where he will very soon discover them. But if he engages in the arduous task of attempting to trace them up to the only authentic sources, the writings of the evangelists, and apostles, and to establish them upon their authority, he will, or I am very much mistaken, find that he has laboured in vain, and spent his strength for nought.

I have now, I believe, offered my remarks upon

every thing contained in the second letter which your friendship has induced you to address to me with the kindest and purest motives; and I have many reasons to thank you for it, as it has engaged me fully to reconsider the arguments for, and against, the doctrine of the Trinity, and the opinions connected with it: the result of which has been, the most perfect and satisfactory confirmation of the opinion I was compelled to adopt upon a former investigation, -antecedently to which I had been a Trinitarian myself,-that they have no foundation in Scripture, but are mere human inventions, by which the purity and simplicity of the Gospel have been most dreadfully corrupted. I have been obliged to express myself freely in writing upon these subjects; but, I trust you will do me the justice to believe, without a particle of asperity, or ill will, towards any of the individuals who maintain them. Great and excellent characters, men of the highest attainments, and of the most exemplary piety, have held, and still hold, those opinions, which appear to me, to be gross errors, and manifest absurdities; and most uprightly, and conscientiously, believe them to be sacred truths. But this does not alter their nature. That must be determined, not by great names, nor by high authorities, but by their conformity, or nonconformity, to the Holy Scriptures, which every man, calling in the best assistance he can obtain, must exercise his own judgment upon, and determine for himself. If the opinions of fathers and councils, however numerous, or of individual writers, however eminent and respectable, were to be implicitly relied upon,

we ought never to have renounced the errors of popery. It has been justly observed that there is no opinion so ridiculous and absurd, that it has not at some time or other been maintained by some man of learning and ability; and the history of the councils that have been held at various periods, displays to us such sad instances of ignorance and bigotry, fraud and violence, that it is impossible to feel the least degree of respect for the decrees, which they have from time to time thought fit to make. Constituted as they too frequently were, and conducting their deliberations, and making their decrees, in the manner, and upon the principles, which they too often did, they are entitled to no credit for their determinations with any one who reads the accounts we have of their proceedings, except as far as they accord with his own opinion, formed by deliberately, and impartially, examining and judging for himself. It frequently happened that the majority were manifestly wrong, and the minority as decidedly right; and it was no uncommon thing for some of these learned bodies to determine in direct opposition to others. Individual members, who had the courage to raise their voices against the general cry of bigotry and faction, have been reviled and ill-treated, during their sittings, in the grossest, and most outrageous manner, for the honest opinions which they thought it incumbent upon them to express. I should be glad to be able to say, that there was no instance, even in one of the earliest of these councils, of a member having actually been killed by his reverend brethren for venturing to dissent from the opinion of the majority. Such was the freedom of debate in these assemblies, and such the chance of any question being fairly, and calmly, discussed among them.

As to the articles of faith which they have decreed. let one suffice. Can any thing be more absurd, and monstrous, than the doctrine, that a man, by muttering a few words over a piece of bread, can make his Creator: and that, after he has made him, it is his duty to eat him? Yet this doctrine, impious and shocking as it is, has been established as an article of faith by the decrees of councils, consisting of hundreds of dignified, and learned divines. The language of eminent and reverend individuals, who have adopted the doctrines of these assemblies, has been, if possible, still more shocking, and disgusting. Some of them have said, "that they can make their Creator whenever they please; that he obeys the priest, let him be where he will, at every hour, at his simple word; that they carry him whither they please; that he goes into the mouth of the wicked, as well as of the righteous; that he makes no resistance, that he does not hesitate one moment." Another of them, a man of great rank amongst them, Cardinal Zabar, says, "that the Pope" may do what he pleases, even things unlawful, and that he is therein more than God," thus shewing him, though without intending it, to be literally the man of sin predicted by the Apostle, 2 Thess. ii. 4, "who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped." Is it possible after this. to feel any reverence for the determinations of such bodies, or any respect for the opinions of such indivi-

duals, however learned, or exalted? But this is what mankind must descend to, if they once give up the right of private judgment, and, deferring to human authority, suffer any of their fellow mortals to assume the privilege of determining for them, in questions between them and their God. Let us stand fast therefore in that liberty, with which Christ has made us free; and acknowledging no Master but him, maintain, as our ancestors did at the Reformation, that the Bible is the religion, and private judgment the right, of Protestants. Upon that basis has Protestantism always been successfully defended, and upon that basis only, can a successful defence be made for it. Nor let us suppose, because the Reformers from popery did, much, that there is nothing left for those who follow them to do. It was not to be expected, that they should discover and relinquish all the errors, which had been engrafted upon Christianity, and had identified themselves with the religious sentiments of the Christian world, during the long course of fourteen centuries. Much still remains to be accomplished. Thank God, a great progress has been made in our own times, and is still proceeding with increasing effect. It must not be forgotten, however, that Christianity in its most corrupt form, produces great benefits, and makes men incomparably better, than any other religion. Even the Church of Rome, debased and degraded as it is, by the monstrous corruptions that have been introduced into it, and the idolatrous, and pagan, rites, which it has adopted, has produced such men as Erasmus, and Sir Thomas More, as the good Bishop

of Marseilles, and the eminently meritorious, and amiable, Fenelon. In our own country, where Christianity is established upon purer principles, where it is found more nearly resembling, what it was, when it came out of the hands of our Saviour and his apostles; and in our own age, in which the rights and duties of Christians are better understood, and more candidly, and liberally, acknowledged, than at any former period;—every sect among us, can furnish numerous instances of the most pious, learned, benevolent, and useful characters, spreading the genuine lustre of Christianity around them, and adorning the doctrines of our common Master by their lives and conduct. What multitudes of different denominations and persuasions, have united in the true spirit of Christian candour and benevolence, to spread the name, and circulate the gospel, of their great and illustrious head; all anxious still further to enlighten, and improve the Christian world, and to evangelize the heathen nations, which have never yet received his truth! And who that feels the real spirit of Christianity kindling in his bosom, can help wishing success to them all? as the success of each would be productive of good, though in different measures and degrees. This is an union, which could never have been accomplished by bigotry and persecution; an union which it is to be hoped will be daily, and yearly, drawing the different sects and parties amongst Christians nearer and nearer to each other, and rendering them all more happy and useful. Nevertheless, whilst there are men, there will be differences of opinion, as well upon religious, as upon all other subjects; for though we have reason to expect, that in due time all great and dangerous errors will disappear, and that a further approximation of sentiment will be continually going on; yet, like those geometrical lines, which are constantly approaching each other, but can never meet,-perfect uniformity of opinion, in all respects, may not, and perhaps never was designed to take place; and where men are well informed of, and duly respect, the rights of each other, much good may result from some differences of opinion, as affording room for the exercise of mutual benevolence, candour, and charity, as calling forth the energies of the human intellect, making the members of every different sect more circumspect in their conduct, that they may not disgrace, but do honour to, themselves and their community; and keeping up a more constant, and active attention to religion itself, which binds them all in its comprehensive embrace, and will finally ensure the safety and happiness of all who obey its precepts, and walk worthy of the vocation with which they are called.

I am, my dear Sir,

Yours most truly and faithfully.

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## LETTER III.

My DEAR SIR,

Though we are not engaged in mortal warfare, and neither of us, I am persuaded, is anxious for victory, but for the sake of Truth, I perceive from your third letter that the contest is not yet closed; that, as you have failed in persuading me to pass over to your side of the question, so I have not yet the pleasure of seeing you on mine; but must once more collect my forces, and prepare to take the field for another campaign.

It appears to me, that there must be some mistake in the remark you make,—that I close with a summary of evidence in favour of my sentiments,—as the close of my last letter contains no summary of evidence at all. But to whatever part of the evidence I have produced you may happen to allude, you say, "that it is all irrelative, as directed against your sentiments; for that you most fully agree to the humanity of the Redeemer, his subjection to the Father and devotion to his glory, and to the honours and rewards which he received in consequence." It is quite clear, however, though you

appear to be unaware of it, that you do not agree to the humanity of the Redeemer, but only to the humanity of part of him, and in like manner only to the subjection of part of him to the Father, and to the honours and rewards received by part of him; for you immediately add, that all this perfectly accords with the hypothesis of another nature, infinite, eternal, SUPREME.

This, it must be allowed, is a short way of getting rid of long arguments; but it is begging the question throughout, taking for granted the very thing in controversy, and forgetting entirely what I had offered in my last Letter, to shew that our blessed Lord had only one nature. But, my dear Sir, let me entreat you candidly to inform me, whether the Scriptures speak any such language as this. Where do they say, that it was only his human nature that was subject to the Father; that it was only his human nature that was devoted to his Father's glory; that it was only his human nature that was rewarded and honoured in consequence of it? Where does our blessed Lord, or where do any of his Apostles, ever speak of his having two natures? This is a question which I have asked before, but which has not received any answer, and I firmly believe never will.

It lies upon you, my good friend, who, notwithstanding the absolute silence of our Lord himself, and all his Apostles, upon this subject, have taken upon you, contrary to all appearance and to all probability, to

assert that he has two natures, to prove the fact. But this you have not done: neither have you shewn that his divine nature, supposing that he had any such, did any thing to accomplish or advance the purposes of his mission. On the contrary, I think I have proved, that if such a nature existed in him, it was absolutely useless, never having performed any miracle, made any revelation, or endured any suffering. It seems to me, that if we call in a God, it should be for a purpose worthy of a God. There should be a "dignus vindice nodus." He should not be introduced merely to do nothing.

As a Trinitarian, you cannot, in my humble opinion, maintain with any degree of consistency, that the humanity of the Redeemer, his subjection to the Father, his devotion to his glory, and the honours and rewards he received in consequence, perfectly accord with another nature, infinite, eternal, and supreme: for it is undeniable, though you appear to have lost sight of it upon this occasion, that, according to the Trinitarian hypothesis, the two natures were inseparably united, and constituted but one person, which person was the Redeemer of whom we are speaking. The subjection therefore of the whole, that is of the Son, does not at all accord with the supremacy of part. Neither was his subjection confined to the period of his humiliation, whilst he was an inhabitant of this lower world; but extends to his present, and is to extend to his future, exalted and glorified state; when he is, notwithstanding, to be subject to the Father, without the slightest intimation being given, that this is predicted of only a part of him.

Gilbert Wakefield, you tell me, owned, that the double view of Christ, as both God and man, best accords with the letter of Scripture, though he adds, Here also, "the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life." To which I reply, that if it was his opinion, it is not mine; except in one sense, namely, that in which Moses was both God and man (Exodus vii. 1): in which the princes, rulers, and magistrates mentioned in Exodus xxi. 5, 6; Exodus xxii. 8, 9, 28; in the Book of Numbers, and in the Psalms: in which the Prophets and holy men of old mentioned in the Old Testament, and referred to by our Lord in the New, (John x. 34,) were both Gods and men: and in which sense, and in which only, he (our illustrious Head) intimated, that he should have been justified in making himself God. Taking it in this sense, the difficulties are solved at once, and the letter and the spirit completely harmonize. This exposition is the more valuable, because it is one of our Lord's own, and therefore comes down to us stamped with the highest authority. But it has nothing whatever to do with two natures, which is a doctrine not supported by the letter, or the spirit, of a single text.

It does seem to me, that, before you had pronounced the evidence I offered against your sentiments to be all irrelative, because you fully agreed to the humanity and subjection of the Redeemer, which you supposed

fully to accord with the hypothesis of another nature, infinite, eternal, and supreme, it would have been well if you had considered, that part of the evidence adduced by me proved, that if there had been another nature in our Lord, it could not have been either infinite or supreme; for that, according to his own declarations, it could not have been possessed of infinite knowledge, he himself having excluded his divine nature, if he had any such, from all knowledge of the day of judgement: —nor of infinite power, not having power to appoint to places on his right hand and on his left, in the future state; and not being to be invested with it even then, the Father having reserved this entirely to himself, (Matthew xx. 23,) as well as the time of the restoration of the kingdom to Israel, which our Lord informed his disciples, even after his resurrection and exaltation, that the Father had put in his own power. (Acts i. 7.)

Can a being then, which is neither omniscient nor omnipotent, be infinite, and supreme? It is a contradiction in terms: and consequently the second nature you contend for, is, and must be, a nonentity, a mere creature of the imagination. My evidence therefore, to which you appear to allude, considered as directed against this view of the person of the Redeemer, is all relevant, consisting as it does of declarations made by our blessed Lord concerning himself absolutely, and entirely, without the most remote allusion to any particular part, or nature, belonging to him; of which not a single instance can be produced from any of his dis-

courses. And these are not only relevant in this point of view, but some of them are absolutely irreconcileable with all ideas of the infinity or supremacy of any part of, or nature belonging to, him; shewing plainly from his own words, that neither his divine nature, supposing him to have had any such, nor both his natures united, were either omniscient or omnipotent, and still less supreme. When so strange an hypothesis, as that of two such natures co-existing in the person of our Lord, is proposed, every rational inquirer will expect to be informed upon what foundations it rests, and what proofs of it are to be found in the Scriptures, before he will accede to a doctrine so extraordinary and improbable. No such proof, however, has been produced.

Having desired to call my attention to a summary of the evidence in favour of your sentiments, you begin by stating, "that the Christian religion was not a new thought introduced into the world two thousand years ago; but was promised in Paradise immediately on the fall; that a system of religion was given to introduce it into full possession of the world; that it was revealed to a people thus prepared for it, and promulgated to the world by men thus imbued with previous sentiments; that they knew that the promised Saviour was first announced to the world, as the seed of the woman,—which, you remark, was a peculiar phrase, to say the least; that he was then more clearly announced, as one that was to be born of a virgin; for this, you

say, is the meaning of the Hebrew as well as the English." Now, my dear Sir, whatever peculiarity you may imagine to be in the phrase 'seed of the woman,' is every one to be deemed the Supreme God, respecting whom a peculiar phrase is used, though it means no such thing? If such a rule of construction were to be adopted, I am afraid we should be like the Heathen of whom the Apostle Paul speaks, who had "Gods many, and Lords many." But what was itafter all, that was promised in Paradise?-Nothing more than that the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head: a phrase of no great peculiarity; for, as the woman only was deceived by the serpent, it was said very naturally, and certainly with more point and with greater beauty and propriety, that the seed of the woman should bruise the head of the serpent, rather than the seed of the man, who had not been deceived by him, though the seed was in fact to be the seed of Nor must it escape our recollection, that the seed is throughout represented to be the seed of the same woman who was deceived by the serpent, that is Eve. It was her seed that was to bruise the head of the serpent; and there is no allusion to any other woman, much less to the supposed virgin mother of Christ, in any part of the history of this transaction.

But whosesoever seed was alluded to,—whether the seed of the woman, or of the man, or of both, or even of the mother of Christ,—no proof whatever can be

deduced from it, that such seed was to have two natures, or was to be any thing more than a man.

'The seed of a woman' naturally means one born of, or descended from, a woman: but if it meant also one born of a human mother, without the instrumentality of a human father, it does not at all follow that he would be God, though the want of a human father were to be supplied by the direct and miraculous exercise of the power of the Most High; for a miraculous conception, or production, of any kind, does not prove the Divinity of the being thus conceived or produced. Adam we know was miraculously produced, without human father or human mother, by the immediate operation of creating power; yet we have reason enough to know that he was no Divinity; and it was never pretended that he had more than one nature, and that not a divine nature, not the nature of Him who was his only parent, but a mere human nature only.

The origin of this strange opinion seems likely to have been, that some of the early converts from paganism, having brought into their recently adopted faith many of the preconceived notions which they held whilst in a pagan state, and having deified their new master, as some of the sons of their former Gods had been deified, in order, as they conceived, to do him, as well as themselves, more honour,—the two natures was an after thought, a second invention, devised to

support the first, which, without some such contrivance, could not have been maintained in the face of the numerous texts of Scripture which describe him, even in his exalted state, as still a man.

Amongst the pagan nations, particularly the Greeks and Romans, the apotheosis of their heroes and great men,—some of whom they first pretended to be sons of their gods, to take away the reproach of their illegitimacy, and after their deaths deified, and paid divine honours to them as such, -was quite familiar to their minds: and when, upon their embracing Christianity, they found their great and newly adopted master described both as the Son of God, and as a God in the inferior Jewish sense of the word, they, who had been frequently in the habit of hearing of, and believing in, the deification of Hercules and Bacchus, and other sons of Jupiter, were in great measure prepared for, and likely to receive without difficulty, an erroneous opinion,-that, as the reward of his virtues and sufferings, he had, after his death, been exalted, and made a God in a similar sense; particularly as such exaltation and deification would be calculated in their opinion to reflect great credit upon him and his religion, and serve to efface the scandal of the cross, which, being a punishment inflicted upon slaves, men of the lowest class, was a greater objection to Christianity in those times, than we can at present easily conceive. The Jewish Christians, on the other hand, being either entire strangers to these practices in the Heathen

world, of deifying men, and adding them to the number of their false gods; or holding them in utter abhorrence: and knowing, that calling him 'the word,' was only personifying the word of God which came to him, and denoting him to be a prophet who communicated theword of the Most High to the world; and that calling him 'the word,' 'a God,' was only giving him the same name of dignity or authority which had been bestowed upon other rulers and prophets before him; were not likely to be seduced into any such opinions or practices, but to adhere more closely to the faith delivered to them by our Lord himself and his apostles, and to honour him as "a man approved of God, by miracles, signs, and wonders, which God did by him."

Now this appears to me to have been precisely what happened—the proper Deity of our blessed Lord having been introduced by Gentile Christians, and having gradually gained ground among them, till it became at length predominant; whilst among the Christians of the Jewish nation it made no progress at all, but was constantly rejected by them.

Nor would it have made any difference in these respects, had our Lord, as you have supposed, been announced as one that was to be born of a virgin, and had been so born accordingly; for that would still have been nothing more than a miraculous conception, and would not have proved the person so conceived to have been God, or to have had two natures, or to have

been in any respect more than a man. Not that I admit the fact of his having been born of a virgin, or of its having ever been predicted that he should; having proved, I think, very satisfactorily, that the passage Isaiah vii. 14, which you allude to, has no reference to our Lord at all. Nor do I admit that the child predicted by Isaiah, whoever he may have been, was born of a virgin, the Hebrew, I am informed, bearing the translation of young woman, as well as that of virgin, and I stated it in the alternative, virgin or young woman: but supposing it to have meant 'virgin,' the then virgin might, as I observed, have afterwards married, and have had a son.

Upon what authority you state that 'virgin' is the meaning, by which you appear, as the assertion is made in opposition to my rendering of 'virgin or young woman,' to intend exclusive meaning of the Hebrew, you have not informed me; nor can I form a conjecture, unless it be some of the Greek and Latin fathers, one of the earliest of whom, however, Irenæus, informs us, that Theodotion of Ephesus, and Aquila of Pontus, both Jewish proselytes, translate it, "a young woman shall bear a child." According to Dr. Priestley, the Jews, and Symmachus the Ebionite, (whose translation of the Old Testament into Greek is quoted with the highest respect by Origen, Eusebius, and all the ancients,) and who, he observes, were certainly better judges than either the Greek or Latin fathers, say that it often signifies a young woman only. We are informed also in the Gospel of St. John, that our Lord had a human father, as well as mother. Thus in John i. 45, it is said: "Philip findeth Nathanael, and saith to him, We have found him, of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph." Again, in John vi. 42, we find the Jews saying, in his presence and hearing, "Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know?" and our Lord immediately replying to them; without uttering one word in denial, or disapprobation of the assertion, which would have been entirely false, as well as that next preceding, if he had been born of a virgin.

Notwithstanding all this, however, and though you have not invalidated the proofs I produced to shew that this passage does not refer at all to our Lord, you reassert it, exactly in the same manner as if it had never been impugned.

It is truly extraordinary, if, as you state, "a system of religion was previously given to introduce Christianity into the full possession of the world, and the Christian religion was revealed to a people thus prepared for it, and promulgated to the world by men thus imbued with previous sentiments, who knew that our Lord had been first announced as the seed of the woman, and was then more clearly announced, as one that was to be born of a virgin," that not one of the men thus imbued with those sentiments, and possessed of this knowledge, and by whom the Christian re-

ligion was so promulgated, his own apostles in particular, ever preached what, if it had been true, would have been a most important doctrine; namely, that he had been born in this unusual and supernatural manner, which must have eminently distinguished him from all other men, and have been calculated in their opinion to reflect the highest honour upon him. Many of their discourses to the people have come down to us, in not one of which is any such thing to be found.

Would Philip, one of his own apostles, if he had been imbued with these previous sentiments, if he had ever believed, or heard of, his having been so clearly announced, as one that was to be born of a virgin, have told Nathanael, in flat contradiction to all such previous sentiments, that he (Philip) and some others of the apostles had found him, of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph? Common sense forbids us to answer in the affirmative; it being quite clear from this passage, that Philip, and the other apostles just spoken of, believed Jesus to be the Messiah, and that he was the son of Joseph: consequently none of them could have had the least idea, that the Scriptures had announced him as one who was to be born of a virgin.

Nor is this all: for it was not only unknown to these apostles, but also to Nathanael; for if the latter had been acquainted with it, when our Lord was thus announced to him, as the son of *Joseph*, he would na-

turally have exclaimed, The Son of Joseph! how can that be? The Messiah is to be born of a virgin, and consequently cannot be the Son of any man. So that all these persons, whom you suppose to have been, in common with the rest of their countrymen, imbued with such opinions, appear decidedly to have known nothing about the matter; but to have been in a state of profound ignorance of the existence of any such notions. The conclusion is obvious; namely, that the doctrine was at the time unknown, and that the passage, Isaiah vii. 14, was not interpreted then, as it is now, nor considered as referring to the promised Messiah, as it is at present.

Is it possible, that a people prepared in the manner you suppose; that men imbued with the sentiments, and possessed of the knowledge you have imagined, should not only have had no idea of these doctrines, or of any other doctrine connected with the Trinitarian hypothesis; but should even have been ignorant, that our Lord's kingdom was to be a spiritual kingdom, and have expected him to be a mere temporal prince, destined to reign on earth for ever, and to establish an universal empire? That this was the general opinion of the Jews at large appears from all history; and that it was the opinion of our Lord's own apostles and disciples, up to the time of his crucifixion, and even afterwards, is plainly taught in the Scriptures.

It would have been wonderful, if the Jewish nation

had been prepared for, and imbued with, Trinitarian sentiments, that the Apostle Peter in the first sermon he preached to them after our Lord's resurrection, should never have alluded in the most remote manner to any Trinitarian opinion; but should merely have represented him as a man, and nothing more: and still more so, that not a single Jew whom the apostles converted, nor the Jewish church at Jerusalem which they founded, should ever have been Trinitarians. This, though at first controverted by Bishop Horsley, was undeniably proved by Dr. Priestley, and established upon so firm a basis as the former was totally unable to shake; by which the question seems to have been entirely set at rest; even the supposed church of Jewish Trinitarian Christians at Ælia, which was imagined by the good bishop to have risen from its ruins, having been subverted from its very foundations.

I am persuaded, my dear Sir, that you would not have stated so confidently, "that the Messiah was foretold by Isaiah (ix. 6,) as the wonderful, counsellor, mighty God, in such a way as excludes the notion of a God," if you had looked beyond the common version, which we are by no means entitled to consider as an oracle not to be disputed: the authors of it, however valuable their labours may have been upon the whole, and however deserving they may have been of commendation, considering the time when, and the circumstances under which, they made it, having shewn

themselves in many instances to have been very fallible; and I believe it is now generally admitted, that they were mistaken in their translation of the prophecy in question.

Even Bishop Lowth remarks, that there are many and great difficulties in it; and he corrects the common version in a most important point, rendering, instead of 'the everlasting Father,' 'the Father of the everlasting age'; whilst other translations, and those very ancient ones, render it the 'Father of the future age'. See the Septuagint, and the Vulgate. It is said, likewise, that the words 'the Mighty God' might have been more properly rendered 'a mighty God', or 'Judge', or 'Ruler', the words in the original not being Hael Haggibbor, as in Jeremiah xxxii. 18, but El Gibbor; and some of the manuscripts, particularly two of the most ancient and valuable, namely the Vatican and Alexandrine, omitting the word 'God' altogether. The former, instead of it, reads 'the Messenger of the great design'. It is questionable therefore, as Mr. Yates justly remarks, whether the word El, or Al, translated 'God', to which there is nothing corresponding in any of the ancient Greek versions, be a genuine part of the Hebrew text. Supposing it, however, to be genuine, there seems to be greater reason for considering it as having been used in the inferior sense, in which our Lord himself intimated that it might have been applied to him, (John x. 34-36), and for translating it 'a mighty Judge', 'Prophet', or 'Ruler',

than for adopting the translation given to it in the common version, which corresponds with none of our Lord's declarations, nor with those of any of his apostles, none of which designate him by the appellation of 'the mighty God.' In this state of things, what becomes of the text for Trinitarian purposes; it being evident that no doctrinal point can be established upon such a basis, much less so stupendous and improbable an one, as that a person who appeared as a man; who declared himself, and was declared by others, to be a man; who felt pain and pleasure, hunger and thirst, as other men do; and finally died, like another man,was the mighty God who fills the heavens and the earth? Who would translate in this manner, even if the word 'God' was indisputably part of the text, when there was another translation, obvious, easy, natural, agreeing with our Lord's own ideas of the use of the word 'God' as applied to him, and unattended with any of these difficulties?

As little are you entitled, my good friend, to say that "the Jews never employed the word a God, but by way of reproach." Was not our Saviour a Jew; and did he not (John x. 34, 35) refer to the prophets to whom the word of God came, as having been called Gods in the law itself? and will any one affirm that the word was applied to them by way of reproach, either by our Lord or by the great promulgator of the Jewish law? or that, when any one of them was thus spoken of indefinitely, he was not spoken of, and

considered, as a God, and not as God, or the God absolutely?

But I shall carry this a little further. In Exodus xxi. 5, 6, you will find; "And if the servant shall plainly say, I love my master, my wife, and my children; I will not go out free: then his master shall bring him unto the Gods (so it is literally, though translated Judges in the common version); he shall also bring him to the door, or unto the door-post; and his master shall bore his ear through with an awl, and he shall serve him for ever." See also Exodus xxii. 8, 9: "If the thief be not found, then the master of the house shall be brought unto the Gods, to see whether he have put his hand unto his neighbour's goods. For all manner of trespass, whether it be for ox, for ass, for sheep, for raiment, or for any manner of lost thing, which another challengeth to be his, the cause of both parties shall come before the Gods, and whom the Gods shall condemn, he shall pay double unto his neighbour." In the same chapter (verse 28) you will find this law: "Thou shalt not revile the Gods, nor curse the ruler of thy people." Can any one imagine that the great legislator of the Hebrew nation blew hot and cold upon this occasion with the same breath; and, by using the word 'God' as a term of reproach, was the first to break the law, which he was pronouncing by the command of the Most High, at the very moment of its promulgation? In the First Book of Samuel, chap. ii. 25, is this declaration: "If any

man sin against another, the God shall judge him: but if a man sin against the Lord, who shall entreat for him?" In 1 Chron. xxiv. 5, it is in the original "The governors of the sanctuary, and the governors of the Gods, were of the sons of Eleazar, and of the sons of Ithamar." Is it to be supposed, that the historian meant to reproach the chief priests here referred to, who were honourably employed in the time of David, a religious prince, in some of the higher departments of the service of the Lord? Finally, in 2 Esdras, vii. 3, which I have before cited, are the words, "There was sent unto me the angel which had been with me before; and he said unto me, Rise, Esdras, and hear the word I am come to tell thee: and I said, Speak on, my God."

It is perfectly clear that the term 'God', as applied to these persons, was not, in any one of the instances I have produced, used as a term of reproach; and that if, in any one of them, any ruler or magistrate mentioned, had been spoken of singly and indefinitely, the literal rendering into English must have been a God; and, by the way, I must observe, that in my opinion the same term as applied to Moses (Exodus vii. 1), "See I have made thee a God to Pharaoh," was not employed as a reproach, but the contrary; Moses, to whom the term is here applied, and who thus was to be a God unto Pharaoh, by reason of the stupendous miracles which he was by the Most High commissioned and empowered to perform, having

been preeminently distinguished by his appointment to this high office: and though the miracles subsequently wrought by him astonished, and ultimately overawed Pharaoh, at the same time confounding the magicians, and making them acknowledge that they were performed by the finger of God; there was no term of reproach, or reproachful allusion, as you have supposed, made use of in this discourse, even against Pharaoh's gods, as if Moses was to do more than they would be able to resist; for they are not once mentioned, or alluded to, in the whole discourse. Nay more, when the magicians are in the succeeding chapters introduced as endeavouring to counterfeit the miracles of Moses, it is no where said that they pretended to do it by any assistance of their Gods; but by their enchantments, (in the original, secret sleights of hand, or jugglings,) and their Gods are never once mentioned, or alluded to, upon the occasion.

You remind me "that the Messiah was promised under the name of Jehovah, which the Jews, you say, were taught to consider the incommunicable title of the Supreme Being; and that it is said by one prophet, 'This righteous branch which shall be raised up, shall be called Jehovah our righteousness;' and that another had declared that 'in Jehovah should the seed of Israel be justified, and glory, and say, In Jehovah have I righteousness,' &c.; and that passages which are spoken of Jehovah in the Old Testament, are without scruple applied to Christ by the apostles in the

New Testament." To which I reply, that though the Jews had, from some source or other, imbibed very superstitious notions respecting the name Jehoval, which made them decline mentioning it when they could avoid it, substituting the word 'Lord' in its place; they certainly did not learn this from their Scriptures, nor that the name itself was incommunicable; since they must have seen, if they had taken the trouble to consult them, that it was continually used by their ancestors in the times of the prophets, without any scruples of this kind; and was actually communicated in numerous instances to men, places, and things, meaning nothing more than that they were in a particular manner favoured by, or consecrated to, that Great Being whose name was thus, as a mark of distinction, communicated to them, or that they represented or resembled him; or in the case of places, that he had performed, or intended to perform, some great display of his power or goodness there. Thus, as I have remarked in my former letter (p. 32), the great prophet who slew the priests of Baal was called Elijah, that is 'my God Jehovah.' So one of the sons of Jeroham was called Eliah, meaning also 'God,' or 'my God Jehovah.' 1 Chron. viii. 27. In like manner the name Hoshaiah, that is 'Saviour' or 'Salvation Jehovah,' was given to the father of Jezaniah. Jer. xlii. 1. The name of Jehoshua, that is 'Jehovah the Saviour,' to Oshea the son of Nun. Numbers xvi. 13. I am aware that you, in common with many other

Trinitarians, believe, though without any proof, this name to have been given to him, because you consider him to have been a type of Christ. But this does not assist you at all in the present instance; inasmuch as the name still appears, upon this supposition, not only to have been incommunicable, but to have been actually communicated to a type; and if its being communicated to the type does not prove him to have been more than a man, neither does its communication to the antitype prove, per se, one jot more. The salvation of Jehovah, as it respected the Israelites, by delivering them out of the hands of their enemies, and establishing them in the land of Canaan, was wrought by the instrumentality of Oshea the son of Nun, to whom therefore the name of Jehoshua was on that account given. Another great salvation of the same Jehovah, and a more extensive one, as embracing the whole human race, was wrought by him, through the instrumentality of Christ, who is notwithstanding represented by the apostle Peter, even after his exaltation, to be a man approved of God by miracles, signs and wonders, which God did by him; and consequently if the same name be considered as having been given to him, it will not carry the matter in the smallest degree further; but we shall still have to look for other proof of his being, -contrary to every rule of construction, and to all the analogies furnished by a similar application of the name in other instances, -actually that Jehovah himself, by whose name he was called,

The name Isaiah, which means also 'Salvation Jehovah,' is likewise given to the son of Amos. Isaiah i.

1. The name Jehoshabeath, that is 'The fulness of Jehovah,' is given to a princess, the daughter of Jehoram. 2 Chron. xxii. 11. The name Kolajah, that is 'The voice of Jehovah,' to the father of Pedajah. Nehem. xi. 7. The name of Raamiah, that is 'The thunder of Jehovah,' to one of the companions of Zerubbabel. Nehem. vii. 7. And the name Ahijah, that is 'Brother of Jehovah,' to one of the sons of Jerahmeel. 1 Chron. ii. 25. This last name is a most curious one, and well deserving the attention of all such as fancy that our Lord, or any other person, must be what he is called.

We find, also, that the sacred name of Jehovah is thus communicated, by the great Jehovah himself, to the city of Jerusalem: "In those days shall Judah be saved, and Jerusalem shall dwell safely: and this is the name wherewith she shall be called, Jehovah our righteousness (or prosperity)." Jer. xxxiii. 16. And by Moses to an altar or banner in the following words, "And Moses built an altar, and called the name of it Jehovah Nissi, that is Jehovah my banner." Exodus xvii. 15.

Notwithstanding, therefore, it was imagined by superstitious rabbies, that there was something so sacred in the name of Jehovah, that it was wholly incommunicable, and this fancy of theirs has been received without examination by their successors, to-

gether with a mass of other senseless and ridiculous traditions; when brought to the test of Scripture, it appears to be entirely without foundation. All the evidence to be collected from that venerable and only unquestionable authority, proves the reverse. Great additions might be made to the catalogue I have furnished, if there was occasion for it, nothing being more common than for persons, places, and things, to be called 'Jehovah' and 'God' in the holy Scriptures, because they represented, resembled, or were highly favoured by him, without any intention to denote that they were the identical Jehovah, or God, whose name was thus given to them. I will not say, my dear Sir, "Art thou a master in Israel, and knowest not these things?" because I am quite sure that your intimate acquaintance with the sacred writings must have rendered all these texts perfectly familiar to you; because I am certain that we cannot place our feet upon Old Testament ground, without meeting with such at almost every step we take; not requiring to be dug up with labour and difficulty from below, but lying quite upon the surface, obvious to every passenger. It appears almost impossible to avoid perceiving that this was the common phraseology of the Old Testament writers, and was never designed by them to identify any of the persons, places, or things, to whom the name of Jehovah, or God, was thus given, with that great Being himself, by whose name they were so called. But Trinitarians have for

many years been so accustomed, whenever they have supposed our Saviour to have been called by such names, to regard it as decisive evidence of his actually being Jehovah, the most high God himself,—without taking into their consideration that the very same names, being applied to other persons, and even to places and things inanimate, can furnish no more proof of the one being Jehovah, than the others,—that it is easy to conceive how difficult it must be for them to allow the argument its due weight, and to give up preconceived opinions which have been so long cherished with more than paternal fondness, however great a cloud of witnesses there may be against them.

It does not follow, because "one Prophet says (I suppose you mean Jeremiah xxiii. 6, 7) that 'Jehovah will raise up unto David a righteous branch, and that this is his name whereby he shall be called, The Lord our righteousness;' and another has declared (I suppose you mean to quote Isaiah xlv. 24, 25,) that 'in Jehovah shall the seed of Israel be justified, and glory; and say, In Jehovah have we righteousness," "-that our Saviouris Jehovah, supposing the first prophecy to apply to him: for, since the calling him Jehovah, as has been already shewn, proves no such thing, the declaration that the seed of Israel shall have righteousness in Jehovah, supplies no proof of it, even supposing that the branch is alluded to in the latter prophecy; which by no means appears. Had it even been said in the one place, that the seed of Israel should have righteousness in Jehovah,

and in the other that they should have righteousness in Christ, it would not follow that Christ was Jehovah, the same things being frequently affirmed of two different persons, sometimes in the same sense, and sometimes in different senses. Thus, it does not follow, because the congregation of Israel (1 Chron. xxix. 20) "bowed down their heads and worshipped Jehovah and king David," that David was Jehovah; nor, because the people of Israel (Exodus xiv. 31) "believed Jehovah, and also believed his servant Moses,"-that Moses was Jehovah; any more than it does, because David reigned over Israel, and Solomon reigned over Israel, that therefore Solomon was David: nor is there one jot more reason for concluding, because John the Baptist is said to have gone before Jehovah, and also to have gone before Christ, that therefore Christ is Jehovah; though Mr. Wardlaw gravely offers it as a proof that he is; in answer to which, Mr. Yates, in his Vindication of Unitarianism, p. 194, furnishes us with the following very apposite illustrations. It appears by Exodus xx. 2; Deut. v. 6, that he who brought the Israelites out of Egypt was Jehovah; and by Exodus xxxii. 7; xxxiii. 1, that he who brought the Israelites out of Egypt was Moses, therefore Moses was Jehovah. It appears also by I Samuel ii. 12, that the same persons are called the sons of Eli, and the sons of Belial: therefore Eli was Belial.

Would not this be deemed most wretched reasoning, if employed for any other purpose than to prove the

doctrine of the Trinity? What should we say to an astronomer who should seriously argue in like manner;-The moon revolves round the sun, but the moon revolves round the earth, therefore the earth is the sun. The sun turns upon its own axis, the earth turns upon its own axis, therefore also the earth is the sun. Jupiter revolves round the sun, and the earth revolves round the sun, therefore the earth is Jupiter. Should we not open our eyes a little wider than usual, and contemplate with extreme admiration the learned personage, who should thus enlighten our minds, by reasoning so profound and irrefragable? Yet by similar arguments is it attempted to be proved every day, by men most intelligent and judicious in other respects, that Christ is Jehovah; and, what is more, there may perhaps be found a single person amongst them, even in this age and country, who will brand us poor ignorant Unitarians, with the epithet of "God-denying heretics," because our understandings are so dull, or our wills so perverse, that we cannot, or will not, subscribe to doctrines so clear and demonstrable.

Had the seed of Israel been expressly declared in one place to have righteousness in Jehovah, and in another place to have righteousness in *Christ*, it would have been very important in both places to have determined the sense of the word *in*; and it is difficult to conceive of it as meaning otherwise than, in his sight, or estimation, or by, or through, his means, or

instrumentality; in either of which senses these expressions might very well be construed, without having recourse at all to the violent and forced construction, that Jehovah and Christ are the same, or that Christ is Jehovah. The seed of Israel might have righteousness in the sight of Jehovah, or by or through his means, and also in the sight of Christ his chosen messenger and prophet, who came to declare his will, or by and through his means, in subserviency to, and by the appointment of, Jehovah; and yet Jehovah, and his prophet Christ, be as different persons, as Jehovah and his prophet Samuel, or Elijah.

But I must bring to your recollection, that the very same prophet, repeating the same prophecy, and in the same words, in other respects; instead of saying, that the branch who should be raised unto David, whose coming he again predicts (chap. xxxiii. 15,) should be called Jehovah our righteousness, omits that, and says in the following verse, "In those days shall Judah be saved, and Jerusalem shall dwell safely; and this is the name wherewith SHE (that is JE-RUSALEM) shall be called, Jehovah our righteousness." Now if we are obliged to admit, as we must, that Jerusalem cannot be Jehovah, and to consider the prophecy as meaning nothing more than that Jerusalem should be a righteous city, or a city full of righteous inhabitants, and dedicated to Jehovah; or that the name should be given to it, because Jehovah would display his righteousness there, -why are we to consider the righteous branch to be raised up unto David, and who is to be called by the same name, as mentioned before by the same prophet, in any other light than as a righteous prince dedicated to, and highly favoured by Jehovah, and by whom he intended to display his righteousness to Israel? If the application of the name to the branch or prince here spoken of, be evidence that he is Jehovah, the application of it to Jerusalem will, by parity of reasoning, be evidence likewise, that Jerusalem is Jehovah.

Mr. Christie has judiciously remarked, in his Discourses on the Divine Unity, p. 133: "There are some who think this place ought to be translated thus: This is the name that the Lord (Jehovah) shall call him, Our righteousness." But admitting the propriety of the common translation of this place, and also that it is rightly applied to the Messiah,—the conclusion that our opponents form from it will be found to be groundless and erroneous; for we find in verse 5, that it is the Lord, or Jehovah, that is to raise up unto David a righteous Branch, and a King that shall reign and prosper, &c. This Branch, and this King, therefore, must be a different being from the Jehovah that is to raise him up; and he must also be inferior to, and dependent upon him, because he is to be indebted to him for his kingdom and prosperity. Prophetic names are also given in Scripture to particular persons, not as denoting what these persons are in themselves, but as signs and evidences of what God will perform by them, or bring to pass in their time. Thus Shearjashub signifies 'A remnant shall return;' and Maher-shalal-hash-baz means 'In making speed to the spoil he hastened the prey.' Now neither of these names has any relation to the character of the person who was so called, but is applicable to events that happened at the time he lived. See Isaiah, chap. vii. and viii. In like manner our Lord Jesus Christ being called 'Jehovah our righteousness,' does not denote that hewas Jehovah, but only that Jehovah should make him the means of righteousness to his people, or should by him display his mercy and goodness to mankind, agreeably to what St. Paul says, (2 Cor. v. 19,) "God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them."

Before I close my remarks upon this text, I shall inquire in the first place, who it is that, according to the prophet, is to raise up the righteous branch here spoken of;—to which question the prophet replies, Jehovah: and in the next place, who is the righteous branch that is to be thus raised up;—to which the Trinitarian, who considers the being called by the name of Jehovah to be the same thing as being Jehovah himself, answers—Jehovah. The prediction therefore amounts to this, that Jehovah shall raise up Jehovah; which requires, I presume, no comment.

You tell me that you could give me proofs that passages spoken of Jehovah in the Old Testament, are without scruple applied to Christ by the apostles

in the New Testament, if you supposed that I needed them. Why you should suppose that I, who am an Unitarian, and who consequently must believe that Christ is not Jehovah, do not stand in need of proofs to convince me that passages spoken of Jehovah in the Old Testament are thus without scruple applied to Christ by the apostles in the New-I cannot comprehend. I must therefore declare to you, that if there be any such, I need them very much, and shall be greatly obliged to you, if you will favour me with a list of them, that I may judge how they bear upon the question. I usually produce my authorities for what I advance, by citing the book, chapter, and verse, where they are to be found, which appears to me to be calculated to introduce more certainty into the discussion, and to avoid much trouble and confusion. I rarely find any of your positions thus verified, and am very frequently at a loss to conjecture what passages of Scripture you allude to, as well as obliged to waste a great deal of time in searching for them. I have no right, however, to prescribe the course you shall pursue, and must therefore make my way good in the best manner I can.

In the same general manner you state that every divine name, title, attribute, work, honour, is ascribed to Christ in the Scriptures. As you had made the very same assertion before, I had an opportunity of remarking upon it in my second letter pp. 99, 100, and there shewed, that some of the most important,

such as OMNIPOTENCE, OMNISCIENCE, and SELF-EX-ISTENCE, were not only never ascribed to him, but, upon his own authority, did not exist in him; notwithstanding which, without invalidating my arguments, you repeat the same assertion, with as little ceremony as at first.

But as you still seem to rely upon names and titles, I shall avail myself of it to present you with an additional list of names given to a variety of persons in the Old Teslament, some of them exactly resembling names you suppose to have been given to Christ, and to prove him to be God; from which names so given to these persons, it might be proved that each of them also was God, and possessed of divine attributes; and that any one of them, was any one of the others, precisely in the same manner as you propose to prove, from the ascription of names to our blessed Lord, that he was God, that is, the SUPREME BEING himself. These could not be included in the catalogue I have already submitted to your consideration, as that was necessarily confined to names containing the word Jehovah, or one of its abbreviations.

In 2 Sam. v. 16, we find the name Eliphalet, that is 'The God of deliverance,' given to one of the sons of David. In 1 Chron. xii. 5, Eluzai, which is 'God my strength,' given to one of David's mighty men. In Isaiah vii. 6, the father of the prince whom Rezin king of Syria, and Pekah king of Israel, combined to raise to the dignity of king of Judea in the place of

Ahaz, whom they intended to déthrone, is stated to have been called Tabeal, that is 'A good God.' In 1 Chron. xii. 20, one of the captains of thousands, who revolted from Saul to David, appears to have been called Elihu, which means 'He is my god.' In Job xxxii. 2, the reprover of Job's three friends is also -called Elihu, 'He is my god,' and his father, Barachiel, which is, if possible, still stronger, meaning 'The very God.' In Isaiah xxii. 20, the son of Hilkiah appears to have been called Eliakim, meaning 'God ariseth.' In Ruth i. 2, the husband of Naomi is called Elimelech, that is 'My God the king.' In Nehem. xi. 7, the father of Maaseiah is called Ithiel, which signifies 'God with me.' In Numb. xxvi. 8, one of the descendants of Reuben is called Eliab, that is 'My God the Father.'—I shall close this list with two or three instances of the name 'God' having been given to places and things. Thus, in Gen. xxxii. 30, Jacob called the name of a place Peniel, that is, 'The face of God.' In Gen. xxxv. 7, it appears that Jacob built an altar at Bethel, and called the name of the place El Bethel, that is 'The God of Bethel.' In Gen. xxxiii. 20, it is related that Jacob erected an altar, and called the name of it El-elohe-Israel, that is 'God, the God of Israel.

This, and the previous enumerations which I have furnished, of names given to different persons, calling them Jehovah, and God, and seemingly ascribing to them his divine attributes, many of them as high and lofty as any ever imagined to have been given to our Saviour, will, I presume, be deemed ample to convince us, that no such names, no not all of them together, if all had been conferred upon him, would have been sufficient to prove him to have been really Jehovah.

After stating that every divine name, title, attribute, work, and honour, is ascribed to our Lord in the Scriptures, you subjoin; "All this Jesus knew;" but do not inform me where he has told us so. You have thought proper to say it for him; but he has never said it for himself. On the contrary, he has denied the fact, as I have proved already, and shall therefore make but a single addition here, to the titles and attributes I have before shewn him neither to have claimed, nor to have been possessed of. The title Παντοκρατωρ, usually translated 'Almighty,' so often given to the Father, and which includes one of his highest attributes, is never in the whole compass of Scripture given to our blessed Lord, but to the Father only; and the Christian fathers of the three, if not the four, first centuries seem to have considered it as his peculiar and exclusive designation.

Your next observation is, "that though our Lord is magnified as a model of humility, for voluntarily concealing honours that were his own, rather than snatching at what was not his due; yet he speaks of himself in such terms, as brought upon him alone, of all the inspired messengers of Heaven, the charge of blasphemy, for making himself equal with God." Now

it really appears to me, my dear Sir, even if you were quite certain of this being the nature of the charge, that nothing can shew the weakness of the Trinitarian cause so much, nor so effectually expose the nakedness of the land, as to endeavour to prove what our blessed Lord is, by the charges of his enemies against him; of enemies the most malignant and inveterate; of enemies who were capable of making false charges, and suborning false witnesses to effect their purpose. What would be your own feelings, what your sentiments of the justice or propriety of judging of you, in the same manner as you propose to form a judgement of the character and conduct of your Saviour and your King; that is, by the charges exhibited against him by his bitterest enemies?

Let us investigate, however, the nature of the accusation preferred against him upon this occasion by his Jewish opponents, together with his own observations in reply to it; and we shall soon see that this illustrious Teacher stands as free from the charges made against him by the Jews, as he does from other Trinitarian sentiments imputed to him by his own zealous, though, as I conceive, very mistaken followers in subsequent times. I agree with Mr. Belsham, (Calm Inquiry, p. 161,) that Jesus never claimed equality with God, and that the Jews did not mean to charge him with it; but only accused him of justifying his own violation of the Sabbath, by the authority and example of God; in this respect making himself like

God. See Clarke (No. 580), and Grot. in loc. This rendering of 'like God,' the original, ισον τω Θεω, will admit of, as well as that of 'equal with God;' and as our Lord so often represented himself to be inferior to God, few perhaps will feel inclined to adopt the former without necessity. Supposing it, however, to have been what the Jews intended to impute to him; let us see whether it was not a false charge; let us inquire whether he, who was the subject of it, assented to it in the smallest degree; whether his answer to it furnishes a particle of evidence, that he considered himself equal with the Father, which is what his enemies are supposed to have imputed to him. Does not the very first sentence, which this most excellent, and amiable, but truly humble preacher of divine truth uttered in re-. ply, acknowledge the most marked inferiority; "Verily, verily, I say unto you, the Son can do nothing of himself; but what he seeth the Father do: for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise?" Is this the language of one who considered himself equal with the Father; or that of an humble imitator, who could do none of the things spoken of, but such as he saw the Father do, and even these not of himself? He proceeds thus: "For the Father loveth the Son, and sheweth him all things that himself doeth:" plainly intimating, that he knew them not of himself, till they were shewn to him by the Father; and also why the Father shewed them to him, namely, because he loved him, which if he had not done, non constat,

that he would have shewn them to him, or that he would ever have known them without. It may be asked, What is meant by "all things, that himself (the Father) doeth?" To which I reply, first, that the words "all things," as used in Scripture, are not to be taken in an unlimited sense; of which we have a manifest proof in 1 John ii. 20: "But ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things." Secondly, that it is reasonable to limit them in this instance to all things which the Father was doing for the introduction of the new (or Christian) dispensation by our Lord's agency: for they are by the immediate context not only limited, but limited to things which the Father was then doing; since our Lord instantly adds, "and he will shew him greater works than these, that ye may marvel." So that whatever these "all things" were, they were less than certain other works, which he intended to shew him afterwards, and which would make his disciples marvel; and therefore could not have been all the works of the creation of the universe with its innumerable worlds, than which nothing could have been greater. What the "greater works" which were to be shewn to him thereafter were, he afterwards explains to be the resurrection, and subsequent judgement of the dead, which he states in terms as strongly expressive of inferiority and subjection, as could possibly have been used; acknowledging that the future judgement of mankind was committed or delivered to him by the Father; thereby clearly demonstrating, that it was not originally his own, and that unless the Father had committed it to him, he would not have possessed any such authority—that he was to be honoured as the Father was honoured, because this authority was committed to him; that is, as his Father's representative,—which shews, that until it was committed to him he was not so honoured, nor entitled so to be.

He proceeds in the same style to state, that the Father had given to him to have life in himself, which is an admission that it was the Father's gift, which the Father, of course, might have withheld from him if he had pleased, and without which he would not have had it; and also that until it was so given to him, he had it not—that the Father had given him authority to execute judgement also; shewing again, that this authority was the Father's gift, and consequently might have been withheld; informing us, also, why it was given to him, and not stating it to have been, because he was the divine Logos, the second person in the supposed Trinity, possessed of infinite knowledge, and power, to render him competent to the task; but merely because he was the Son of man; -and after having declared, that "all who are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth, they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of condemnation," adds, as if to impress upon us still more strongly that he had no inherent power, or authority, of his

own; but that whatever he did was to be performed by the power of the Father, through his instrumentality or agency: "I can of mine own self do nothing, as I hear I judge, and my judgment is just, because I seek not mine own will, but the will of my Father who hath sent me."

Is it possible for any one to pay the least attention to all this, and consider our blessed Lord as making himself equal with God? If the Jews designed to impute it to him, the charge was a false one, and our Lord's answer a complete refutation of it. But it is much more probable, that the real charge was, that he had made himself like God; for it appears, that he had miraculously cured a diseased person on the Sabbath day, -always a most heinous offence in their estimation,—and that they therefore sought to slay him; upon which he said to them, "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work;" meaning, My Father worketh on the Sabbath day, and I do the like: in which particular instance he represented himself to be like his Father. Therefore it is said, that "the Jews sought the more to kill him, because he had not only broken the sabbath, but said also that God was his father, making himself like God." He had, it appears, done two things: first, had, according to their mistaken notions, broken the sabbath by working (as they considered it) on the Sabbath day, in curing a man of a disease under which he had long laboured; and, secondly, had called God his Father, by saying that his Fa-

ther (meaning God) worked hitherto, (meaning on the Sabbath day) as well as other days, and consequently did the like, and that he worked; of course justifying himself by the example of God his Father. This they thought fit to consider as making himself like God,—as it certainly was in one sense; and to treat as a most high crime in one who was the son of a common carpenter, and whom they not only did not recognise as the Messiah, but not even as a prophet at all, regarding him merely as an impostor. Our blessed Lord, however, instead of disavowing the making of himself like God, does not suffer it to rest upon their resembling each other, by both working on the Sabbath day; but proceeds to point out to them other instances of such resemblance, such as his doing whatsoever things he seeth his Father do, and his quickening whom he will as his Father doth: but not one word is there in his whole discourse, denoting equality with his Father; but, on the contrary, express acknowledgements that even his authority and his life were his Father's gifts, and that of himself he could do nothing at all. What was there in his calling God his Father, to shew that he made himself equal to him? Does he not encourage us to call the same God our Father, and to resemble and be like him, who is the great source and pattern of all perfection? and does he not, even after his resurrection, call him his Father, and our Father, his God, and our God?

It does not appear, however, that his working on

the Sabbath, and calling God his father, brought upon him any charge of blasphemy: but if they had, and the Jews had in reality also charged him with making himself equal with God, I do not perceive what advantage you could have derived from it;-for surely you would not have attempted to prove him to be equal with God, upon the testimony of false accusers! You would, in the exercise of common candour, have allowed him at least equal credit with his opponents, and have inquired what he said of himself, and not have formed your opinion of him from what was advanced against him by his enemies. In John x. 33, it does appear that they charged him with blasphemy for making himself God, or a God: but there also it appears to have been a false charge, and, as our Lord himself shews, would not, in the sense in which he understood the word, have amounted to blasphemy, had it been true. Whether these false accusations on the part of the Jews proceeded from ignorance or malice, or from both, it is not material at present to ascertain. To ascribe them to ignorance alone, would, if possible, be the most charitable construction: but even upon that supposition, are we to take the ignorant for our instructors? Our Lord himself upon another occasion, speaking of them, and of their most eminent and learned leaders, the Pharisees, says, Matt. xv. 14, "Let them alone; they be blind leaders of the blind." Shall we select such persons then for our teachers, when, if we commit ourselves to the direction of blind guides, we know so well where they are likely to conduct us?

What blasphemy was, in the estimation of the Jews, it is not very easy to determine; the law of blasphemy, as they understood it, being of a very undefined character. They certainly did not annex the same ideas to the term as we do; but were very ready to impute blasphemy, and to take up stones to stone God's messengers and prophets, upon comparatively very slight occasions. It seems not to have been at all necessary for a man to make himself God, or a God, or to speak against God, to incur the charge of blasphemy from this violent, ignorant, and bigoted people; but that what they called blasphemy might be committed by speaking against Moses, or even against the law, or the temple, or city of Jerusalem. See Acts vi. 11, 13, 14, where it appears that our blessed Lord was by no means the only one of the inspired messengers of Heaven, who incurred this charge of blasphemy from them: Stephen, who was also an inspired messenger of God, being there represented to have been put to death by them upon this charge, which was alleged to have been committed by his speaking against Moses, the law, and the temple, or city.

I perfectly coincide with you, my dear Sir, in opinion, "that instead of applying to the study of the New Testament as men without previous ideas, we should apply to it as a continuation of the Old Testament; and in order to understand the evangelists and apo-

stles, we should consider them as speaking the language of men full of Old Testament ideas." Let us examine, therefore, what ideas concerning the nature of the Supreme Being are to be be collected from the Old Testament. On consulting that portion of the sacred volume, we find almost every where, clear, plain, numerous, and repeated declarations of the divine unity; but not a syllable about the doctrine of the Trinity. Not a single passage states, that the divine Being consists of three persons, much less of three persons equal in power and glory. The most deep and absolute silence upon this subject reigns throughout the whole work. Not one writer of the records contained in it, ever professes even to have heard of such a doctrine. We find Old Testament ideas concerning the nature of the Supreme Being conveyed in such words as these; "Hear, O Israel! Jehovah thy God is one Jehovah." Deut. vi. 4. "Jehovah he is God. There is none else beside him." Deut. iv. 35. "Know therefore this day, and consider it in thy heart, that Jehovah he is God in heaven above, and upon the earth beneath. There is none else." Deut. iv. 39. "To whom then will ye liken God? or what likeness will ye compare unto him?" Isaiah xl. 18. "To whom then will ye liken me, or shall I be equal? saith the Holy One." Id. 25. "Before me, there was no God formed, neither shall there be any after me. I, even I, am the Lord; and beside me there is no Saviour." Isaiah xliii. 10, 11. "Thus

saith Jehovah, and his (that is Israel's) redeemer, Jehovah of Hosts: I am the first, and I am the last; and beside me there is no God." Isaiah xliv. 6. "Is there a God beside me? Yea, there is no God; I know not any." Id. 8. "I am Jehovah, and there is none else. There is no God beside me." Isaiah xlv. 6. "For thus saith Jehovah that created the heavens. God himself that formed the earth and made it. He hath established it. He created it not in vain. He formed it to be inhabited. I am Jehovah, and there is none else." Id. 18. "Tell ye, and bring them near; yea, let them take counsel together: who hath declared this from ancient time? who hath told it from that time? Have not I Jehovah? and there is no God else beside me; a just God, and a Saviour. There is none beside me. Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is none else." Id. 21, 22. "Remember the former times of old; for I am God, and there is none else. I am God, and there is none like me; declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done; saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." Isaiah xlvi. 9, 10.

Such are the declarations of the Supreme Being, the great Jehovah himself, clearly, unequivocally, and repeatedly, inculcating the doctrine of the divine Unity; and such are the Old Testament ideas, of which the evangelists and apostles must have been full, and not of Trinitarian ideas, which are no where

to be found in the books of the Old Testament. It is also highly worthy of remark, that these are some of the most important things, which God spoke to the Jewish fathers by the prophets: and as the apostle informs us (Heb. i. 1, 2) that it was God the Father who spoke to the fathers by the prophets, by declaring that God who spoke to them by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, -which excludes all idea of its having been the Son himself, or the Trinity collectively, which includes the Son, and which would be a still more remote and extravagant idea, as it would make him his own Son, and the Son of the Holy Ghost as well as of the Father;—it will be important to consider, how the declarations I have cited, bear upon the Trinitarian hypothesis, keeping fully in our view, by whom, according to the apostles' statement, they were made, namely, the Father. Now it appears by them, that this great Being, the supreme FATHER of all, has declared that he is one Jehovah, that he is God, that there is none else beside him, that besides him there is no Saviour, that there is no God beside him, that he knows not of any, that there is none like him, none equal to him, none to be compared to him. But the Trinitarian, on the other hand, is compelled, in order to support his system, to contend, in contradiction to all this, that there are two others like him, and equal to him, possessed of every perfection he is possessed of, and equally entitled to our prayers, and every other act of religious worship; that

there are two persons who are God, beside him the Father; and that there is another Saviour besides him, who instead of being a Saviour, as his representative, agent, and instrument, is more strictly and emphatically a Saviour than himself.

Are these the Old Testament ideas, of which we must consider the evangelists and apostles to have been full? Unfortunately for the Trinitarian cause, they are no more to be found in the New Testament, than in the Old,—and where else are we to look for proofs of them?

You appear at present, my good friend, rather to shrink from any further reference to the Greek fathers, on finding their evidence turn out rather unfavourably for you: but you will recollect that they were your own witnesses, and not mine. Having produced them, however, you must be content to take them, as we take our wives, for better and for worse. As you had introduced them, I thought fit to put a few questions to them on the other side, by way of cross examination, in order to extract the truth from them, as we frequently do from unwilling witnesses, against their inclinations; and I can assure you I have not yet done with them; but shall propose a few more questions to them before we part, as you will perceive in the sequel.

I can nevertheless assure you, my dear Sir, that I am not conscious of having supposed you to lay more stress upon their authority than you really do, having

merely answered two objections you had, upon their supposed authority, taken to my arguments, accompanied with the observation that they understood their language better than we do, by referring you to our Saviour's own language in one instance, and to the writings of some of the most eminent of these fathers in the other, in support of my positions. They were many of them very sensible and acute writers, and no doubt perfectly understood their own language, for which reason what they say is well entitled to our attention; but at the same time they were very fallible, and laboured under strong prejudices, which renders it incumbent upon us to examine thoroughly all that they advance, to compare it, where we can, with the Scriptures, and then to determine for ourselves.

You observe, "that the reason why  $\Theta_{\varepsilon o \varsigma}$  is an arthrous in John i. 1, is well known to be this; that the Greeks thus expressed the predicate of a proposition, in distinction from the subject, which has the article; that in English, mere position may distinguish the subject from the predicate, but that I am aware that Latin and Greek position is left more at liberty, so that other modes of marking exact signification are necessary—that to have prefixed the article to  $\Theta_{\varepsilon o \varsigma}$  would therefore have made it a mere identical proposition, where the subject might be the predicate, and the predicate the subject; and which, perhaps, I might think would suit your hypothesis; but that it would not, for that you

only admitted that the *Word* was God, not vice versa. Thus if you were writing in Greek, and wished to express what you thought the apostle's meaning, you could with propriety do it in no other way than he has done."

But, my dear Sir, where are your proofs, that the reason why Osos is anarthrous in this instance, which you decidedly state to have been so well known, is because the Greeks thus expressed the predicate of a proposition, in distinction from the subject which has the article? I deny that the evangelist knew of any such rule as you mention, and consequently deny that this was the reason for his writing  $\Theta_{505}$ , as applied to the Word, without the article; and I shall call upon the evangelist himself, as well as upon other more competent witnesses than any modern writers, to support me to the full extent of this. We shall be convinced at once, that the rule was unknown to the evangelist, if we cast our eyes only three verses lower in this very chapter, where we find him writing, as an utter stranger to any such rule, and directly contrary to it if any such existed, in these words, και ή ζωη ην το Φως των ανθρωπων. Here ή ζωη, with the article, is the subject, and το Φως των ανθρωπων, also with the article, the predicate. Hence it is plain, that the evangelist knew of no such rule when he wrote the fourth verse: and who will believe that he knew it, and regulated himself by it, when he wrote the first? No, my dear Sir, the beloved apostle had another, and a better reason, which we need not go far to discover.

He did not make the distinction without a difference; but had an extremely good reason for making it. He remembered well, when he wrote the first chapter of his Gospel, the discourse our Lord had with the Jews, which he has himself recorded in the tenth chapter of it. He knew, that our Lord himself had made the distinction, intimating that he should have been justified in applying the word to himself in the inferior sense of it; in which when used absolutely, it is never written with the article, and therefore, following the example of his Master, did the like, and accordingly used it in the inferior sense here, and therefore wrote it without the article.

If he had designed to use both  $\Theta_{\varepsilon o \nu}$  and  $\Theta_{\varepsilon o \varsigma}$  in the first verse of this chapter, in the same sense, it is clear that he knew of no rule to prevent him from expressing both in the same manner, by prefixing the article to the latter, as well as to the former, and it was far more natural and likely for him to have done so; as it would have expressed his meaning with greater precision and certainty. This supposed rule was also quite unknown to the apostle Paul, who, in entire ignorance of any such, writes thus, in his First Epistle to the Corinthians, xi. 3, Παντος ανδρος ή κεφαλη ο Χριστος εστι. The same may be said of the author of the Book of Revelations, who in chap. xix. ver. 10, writes thus: ή γας μαςτυρία του Ιησου εστί το πνευμα της προφητείας. It was equally unknown to Eusebius bishop of Cæsarea, one of the most learned

of the Greek fathers, who flourished towards the close of the third and early in the fourth century, and who, having written in the Greek language, which was his mother tongue, almost all his life-time, must have been much better acquainted with its rules than any modern writer can be; and who, in his observations on this very passage, also contradicts, not only the supposed rule, but also the concluding remark, which you have unwarily been induced to hazard, from your belief of its existence, and of its having been known to the evangelist, shewing, that if you were writing in Greek, and wished to express what you thought to be the apostle's meaning, that is the Trinitarian meaning, you might with perfect propriety have done it otherwise than the apostle has done, merely by prefixing the article to Ofos, as the apostle might have done, had he thought as you do; but which he has not done, because he thought otherwise, and intended to express a different meaning.

The words of the learned father are as follow: " $\Sigma \alpha$ - $\Phi \omega \varsigma \delta \varepsilon$  τουτων παριστη οίος τις ην (vid.  $\delta$  λογος) επισυναπτων έξης και λεγων 'Και Θεος ην  $\delta$  λογος.' δυναμενος γουν ειπειν, 'Και  $\delta$  Θεος ην  $\delta$  λογος,' μετα της του αρθρου προσθηκης. ει γε έν και ταὐτον ήγειτο τον πατερα ειναι, και τον υίον αυτον τε ειναι τον λογον, τον επι παντων Θεον.' That is, he (the evangelist) has plainly exhibited what was the nature of 'the Word,' by adding afterwards, 'And the Wordwas  $\Im \varepsilon o \varsigma$ , a God;' having it in his power to say, And the Word was  $\delta \Im \varepsilon o \varsigma$ , God, with the ad-

dition of the article, if he had thought the Father and the Son to be one and the same, and the Son to be God over all." Euseb. de Eccles. Theol. lib. ii. cap. 17. Origen expresses similar sentiments in his commentary in loco. I refer you to my former Letter (p. 20) for further authorities and observations upon the application of the word  $\Theta_{\mathcal{EOS}}$ , without the article, to the Son, and of its application with the article, wherever it is used absolutely, to the Father only.

I proceed to consider the second branch of your argument;—that to have prefixed the article to ⊕ sos would have made it a mere identical proposition, where the subject might be the predicate, and the predicate the subject. This brings us at once to the logic of the schools. Let us see, therefore, how the point will stand upon the principles adopted in that science, as they are laid down in part i. chap. 1, of that excellent work upon logic by the late Dr. Watts, which was long considered a kind of standard performance, and is in almost every one's hands. According to the rules there laid down, it appears, that to make a proposition identical, both the terms, and the ideas, of the subject, and the predicate, must be the same; for if either the ideas or the terms differ, the proposition is not identical. In the proposition 'God is God,' the terms and the ideas are the same, and therefore the proposition is identical, and of no value; but in the propositions, 'Jehovah is God,' 'a billow is a wave, 'a globe is a round body,' the terms differ, and

therefore they are not identical. In John i. 1, to have prefixed the article to Osos, would not, as you have stated, have made the proposition identical; for the terms would have differed; and however you might transpose the words, they would not constitute an identical proposition. In the proposition in question, with the addition of the article before  $\Theta_{\varepsilon \circ \varsigma}$ ,—Kal ο Θεος ην ο λογος, -whether you consider ο λογος to be the subject, and o Osos no to be the predicate, as in the common version; or o Oeos to be the subject, and ην ο λογος to be the predicate, and whether Θεος be written with or without the article, the terms would differ, and consequently the proposition would not be identical. It is by no means wonderful, that the Trinitarian cause should derive no benefit from an appeal to the rules of logic; for if logic, as has been always represented, teaches the right use of reason, it will never teach the doctrine of the Trinity, which is as repugnant to reason, as it is to Scripture. Indeed, as has been already observed by some of its most zealous advocates, if it be not authoritatively taught by Scripture, it cannot be established by reason; and were it not to be adored as a mystery, it would be exploded as a contradiction, or absurdity.

You next state "that my argument concludes, to your great surprise, with the assumption, that  $\delta \Theta_{\varepsilon \circ \varsigma}$  is never applied to Christ; but that I must be aware, that Trinitarians produce many passages to the contrary; that on first looking into my letter, you open-

ed your Greek Testament on John xx. 28, δ Θεος μου, &c.; that I must be aware also, that Heb. i. 8, and Rom. ix. 5, are adduced to the same purpose. So 2 Pet. i. 1; Tit. ii. 13; and iii. 4, 'the philanthropy of our Saviour God,' &c.: for you say, the article being prefixed to the former noun, and not the latter, shews that the same person was intended." If you will have the goodness to refer to my letter again, you will find that you have a little misapprehended me, and that I have not made the assumption in question, not having expressed myself so decidedly upon the subject as you suppose; my words being, in the place to which I presume you allude, "for though Osos, without the article, is frequently applied to God the Father, yet & Deos, with the article, is usually, for any thing I know universally, (where no particular Heathen God is mentioned or referred to,) applied to God the Father only." In the only other place to which your remark can apply, my words are, "If the word Osos, supposing it to be applied to our Saviour, is not used in an inferior sense, as it was when applied to other messengers and prophets, who were men like ourselves, why is not our Saviour frequently called & 9805, as well as the Father, who is so called in the Scriptures hundreds, not to say thousands of times? For what reason is this distinction made without a difference?" Now I really do not know, even at present, where the term & 9505, God with the article, is applied to Christ. If any such application

is to be found, I know it not. It is possible, but I am as yet wholly unacquainted with it; the few texts you have cited for the purpose, not proving it, as I shall shew immediately. Having had opportunities, however, of investigating the point more fully since, than I had then, I think I am enabled to say that  $\delta \Theta_{\bar{e}\circ\varsigma}$ , God, with the article, and without any pronoun or other word to limit and restrain its meaning,—that is  $\delta \Theta_{\bar{e}\circ\varsigma}$  absolutely, which it is obvious is all that is meant,—is never applied either to Christ, or to any other person than the God and Father of Christ.

But greatly as you, my dear Sir, seem to have been surprised at my considering the term of Ofos God, with the article, not to have been applied to Christ, I should have felt much greater surprise, if you had been able to find, on opening your Greek Testament, what neither Origen, nor Eusebius, nor Clemens Alexandrinus, in ancient, nor Dr. Clarke in modern times, had ever been able to discover in their whole lives. To ascertain, however, whether you have been thus fortunate, or whether an ardent zeal for what you consider to be the truth, which sometimes influences us all, may not in a slight degree have misled you, let us examine the several texts you have cited. In John xx. 28, Thomas is represented,—on having his disbelief of our Lord's resurrection suddenly removed, by seeing him, and being invited to behold his hands, and reach over his finger for the purpose of putting it into the print of the nails, and to reach over his

hand and put it into his side—to have answered, and said, two things, 'O Kupios mou, nai o Osos mov' in the common version "My Lord, and my God." Here, however, the word  $\Theta_{\varepsilon o \varsigma}$  does not stand absolute, but is qualified by the pronoun  $\mu o v$ : and therefore, even supposing it to be in the nominative case, is no more in point, than if an unconverted Greek, who worshipped Apollo, had called Apollo o' Osos mov, 'the God of me.' Besides this, the literal translation in English, as well as the meaning of the Greek, taking the nouns to be in the nominative case, will be, "And Thomas answered, and said to him, 'The Lord of me, and the God of me." If he had added two words more, and had said "Thou art the Lord of me, and thou art the God of me," this would have made the passage sense, though, on account of the qualification, it still would not have decided this question. But it is more probable, that & Kupios μου, και & Θεος μου, are both in the vocative; as this will make sense of the whole, without any addition; and then the passage will amount to an exclamation, and o, instead of standing as the definite article, meaning 'the' in English, will stand for the sign of the vocative, and be 'O' in English, and will properly be rendered, 'O my Lord, and O my God,' or literally, 'O Lord of me, and O God of me.' Of this we have numerous instances, even in the Scriptures. I shall quote one, where it stands as I have mentioned, and is so rendered even in the common version. Rev. vi. 10,

Έως ποτε ὁ δεσποτης ὁ άγιος και ὁ αληθινος.—"How long, O Lord, holy and true."—See also Mark xv. 34; Luke x. 21; Id. xviii. 11, 13; Rev. xviii. 4. This text, therefore, on both these accounts will not answer the purpose for which it is cited.

Even laying the qualification entirely out of the case, the text would be no authority for the application of the term  $\delta \Theta_{\epsilon 05}$ , that is 'God' with the article, to our blessed Lord, supposing & Oeos upon this occasion to have been spoken of him, as well as to him, and that there was equal reason for considering the nouns to be in the nominative with the article, as in the vocative without it; it being obvious, that a passage admitting equally well of each construction, cannot be an authority for either. I am not disposed, however, to let the matter rest here; as I consider the reasons for believing it to be in the vocative, and Θεος in this place to be 'God' without the article, to preponderate greatly. One of them I have already assigned, namely, that it renders the sense of the whole complete, without alteration or addition. Another is, that o Ofos 'God' with the article, wherever it stands absolute, and its application is clear and certain, is uniformly applied to the Father only, and never to our Lord, or to any other person but the Father. Ought we not then to construe a doubtful passage, by such as are clear? a passage which supplies us with no certain principle to guide us, by others which do? Would it not be irrational, in any other case, to act

otherwise? When, in addition to this, we find Osos without the article applied to other persons besides God the Father; when we find it to have been intimated by our Lord, that he should have been justified in applying it to himself, because it had been applied to others before him; does not this furnish us with a further reason for construing it in this sense? What grounds are there for thinking, that Thomas,-supposing him to have spoken the words & OEOS MOU of our Saviour as well as to him,—considered him to be more than a God in the inferior Jewish sense of the word, which means a prophet, judge, or ruler? If any one can imagine that he did, that he considered him to be God in the superior sense of the word, let him read what almost immediately follows; which I should think must convince him, that this exclamation never meant that our Lord was o Ofoc, 'the God,' meaning the Supreme Being; nor was written that we might believe so; but only that he was the Christ, the Son of God. The words are, (ver. 30, 31,) "And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is," What? ¿ ⊕εος, 'God' with the article, 'God himself?' no such thing; but the Christ, the son, 700 Osov 'of God' with the article.

There have been eminent critics who have considered the words as a sudden exclamation,—on the instantaneous removal of the apostle's unbelief upon

the subject of our Lord's resurrection, -of 'O my Lord!' admitting with surprise, that it was indeed his Lord who had been raised from the dead and stood before him; and 'O my God!' directing his thoughts to, and acknowledging the gracious interposition of, that God, who his Lord had previously informed him was to raise him from the dead, and who was preached shortly after by the apostles and their disciples, as the God that raised him. I cannot say that the passage will not bear this construction, as I do not consider it to be invalidated by the observation, that we must construe the words, 'O my God,' to be addressed to Jesus, and to mean him, as well as the preceding words 'O my Lord,' because they are connected by the conjunction and: but this by no means follows in sudden exclamations, where abrupt transitions may be expected. We find one still more abrupt in 1 Sam. xx. 12: "And Jonathan said unto DAVID, O Lord God of Israel, when I have sounded my father about to-morrow any time, or the third day, and behold if there be good towards David, and I then send not unto thee, and shew it thee, the Lord do so and more to Jonathan." Supposing this to be the genuine construction of the passage, it equally shews it to be no authority for the application of the term  $\delta$ Osos to our Lord, or for any other Trinitarian purpose, but the reverse.

I proceed to Heb. i. 8:  $\Pi_{POS}$  de tov vior, 'O  $\mathcal{D}_{POVOS}$  σου,  $\delta \Theta_{EOS}$ , εις τοναιωνα του αιωνος, rendered in the com-

monversion, "But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever." This text is equally, or even more unfit for your purpose than the last. In the first place, it will admit of being understood, as it is in the common version, to be in the vocative; in which case it will prove nothing, as to the application of  $\Theta_{\epsilon 0 \varsigma}$  with the article to our Lord, for it would upon that supposition be God without the article, and would moreover be most likely to have been used in the inferior sense, in which sense only it is applied to our Lord in any text where the meaning is plain and clear. In the second place, supposing it to be in the nominative case, as I conceive it is, upon which supposition it will be God with the article,—it will be difficult to put any construction upon it, which will not make it denote the Father, and exclude the Son. Dr. Clarke, Grotius, Pierce, Wakefield, Lindsey, and many others, think it may, with equal propriety, be rendered 'God is thy throne for ever and ever.' Sykes considers the meaning to be, 'God is the support of thy throne.' In point of mere grammatical construction, it may be considered as being either in the nominative or in the vocative, and is at least as likely to be in the former as in the latter; for which reason, it can be no proof either way. To put this quite out of doubt, Mr. Yates has furnished a parallel in the sequel to his Vindication, p. 113: O Spovos σου δ Θεος εις τον αιωνα· Heb. i. 8. 'Η μερις μου δ Θεος εις τον αιωνα· Psal. Ixxiii. 26. (Sept.) The

former of these may be translated, 'Thy throne is God for ever,' or 'God is thy throne for ever:' and the latter, 'My portion is God for ever,' or 'God is my portion for ever;' which last is the translation actually adopted in the common version. Some have objected to God being called a throne, as if it were derogatory to his majesty and dignity; but nothing is more common in Scripture, than to call this great and supereminently glorious Being, figuratively, by similar names. Thus in Psalm lxxxiv. 9: Behold: God is our Shield. Id. 11: For the Lord is a Sun and a Shield. Psalm xcii. 15. To shew that the Lord is upright, he is my Rock.

The next text you quote is Rom. ix. 5, ' $\Omega \nu$  of  $\pi \alpha$ τερες, και εξ ών ο Χριστος το κατα σαρκα, δ ων επι παντων Θεος ευλογητος εις τους αιωνας rendered in the common version, "Whose are the Fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh, Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever." This text I cannot help observing appears to me to be still more exceptionable for the present purpose, than either of the former; not merely because Osos is qualified, but because the article is not prefixed to  $\Theta_{\varepsilon 0}$ , but to  $\omega \nu$ , and  $\Theta_{\epsilon o \varsigma}$  is left without an article. In the next place, it is as likely, to say the least, that  $\Theta_{eos}$  is applied by the apostle to the Father, as to the Son, and that & ων επι παντων Θεος ευλογητος εις τους αιωνας is an ascription of praise to him, for the coming of Christ, and ought to be rendered, "He who is God over all

be blessed for ever." This interpretation is supported by Erasmus, Bucer, and Le Clerc, though all three known Trinitarians; and by Grotius, Wetstein, Dr. Clarke, Mr. Locke, Mr. Lindsey, and many others. What, however, carries it still further in favour of the latter interpretation is, that several of the most eminent of the Fathers in the first four centuries, express themselves in such terms as to shew that they must have taken it in this sense, and that it was impossible they could have understood it in the sense adopted by our common version, as they expressly deny, that our Lord was δ επι παντων Θεος, 'the God who is over all.' Dr. Clarke tells us, that the Apostolical Constitutions, and the longer epistles of Ignatius, which, though of dubious authority, are very ancient, represent it as a branch of the Gnostic heresy to affirm Christ to be himself absolutely TOV ETI TAVIAN OFON, 'the God over all.' Const. lib. vi. c. 26. Epist. ad Tarsens. sect. 5. And Origen calls it rashness (which he would not have done, had he thought it to be the doctrine of St. Paul) to suppose Christ to be the God over all, as being inconsistent with his own words, "My Father is greater than I." "Εστω δε, τινας ώς εν πληθει πιστευοντων, και δεχομενων διαφωνιαν, δια την προπετειαν ύποτιθεσθαι τον σωτηρα ειναι 'τον μεγιστονεπι πασι θεον,' αλλ' ουτι γε ήμεις τοι ετον, οί πειθομενοί αυτώ λεγοντι, ό πατηρ, ό πεμινας με, μειζων μου εστι. Cont. Cels. lib. viii. p. 387. And even Eusebius, in all his books against Marcellus, lays it down as the constant known doctrine of the

church, that Christ himself is not  $\delta \in \pi \iota \pi \alpha \nu \tau \omega \nu \Theta \varepsilon \sigma \varsigma$ , and  $\delta \in \pi \iota \tau \varepsilon \varepsilon \iota \omega \nu \delta \lambda \omega \nu \Theta \varepsilon \sigma \varsigma$ , 'The God over all,' but that these are the peculiar titles of the Father; and he particularly affirms, that whosoever applies these titles to the Son, cannot be a pious person."

You then cite Tit. ii. 13: Προσδεχομενοί την μακαριαν ελπιδα, και επιφανειαν της δοξης του μεγαλου Θεου και Σωτηρος ήμων Ιησου Χριστου translated in the common version, "Looking for that blessed hope and the glorious appearing of the great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ." And 2 Pet. i. 1: Tois ισοτιμον ήμιν λαχουσι πιστιν εν δικαιοσυνή του Θεου ήμων και Σωτηρος Ιησου Χριςτου in the common version, "Το them that have obtained like precious faith with us, through the righteousness of God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ." Both these texts, however, fall short of the point in question, even supposing the common version to be wrong, and that right, which you must contend for in order to overturn it, namely, that for want of the repetition of the pronoun ήμων before  $\Sigma \omega \tau \eta \rho \rho \sigma c$ , the whole must be construed as spoken of one and the same person; and therefore, that the words του μεγαλου Θεου, 'the great God,' with the article, in the first, and TOV OFOV 'the God,' also with the article, in the second, are applied to our Saviour; for upon this supposition, it is in the first instance the great God, and Saviour of us, Jesus Christ; so that the word ήμων qualifies the words του μεγαλου Θεου, as well as Σωτηρος: and in the second, ήμων,

coming immediately after TOV OFOV, qualifies those words also, which renders both texts inapplicable to the purposes for which you have quoted them, and Of requires the definite article, merely because it is definite, exactly as it would require it, where the word God was taken in the inferior sense; just as if any prophet, ruler, or judge, belonging to any particular country, town, or society, had been spoken of by his countrymen, or followers; or as if any of the heathens had been speaking of their particular Gods: as it is used, for instance, Acts xix. 37; Hyayete yap tous ανδρας τουτους, ουτε ίεροσυλους, ετε βλασφημουντας την Dear υμων "For ye have brought hither these men, who are neither robbers of churches, nor yet blaspheiners of your goddess." Consequently, if TOU DEOU was in either place applicable to Christ, non constat, that it would prove any thing more, than that he was a great Prophet, Ruler, or Judge. But I cannot agree with you, that either of the texts in question furnishes any proof that TOU MEYALOU OSOU in the first, or του Θεου ήμων in the second, are applied to Christ, the construction of these texts, at all events, not requiring it; besides which, as in all those passages in the New Testament where the meaning is clear and unambiguous, which are very numerous, @505, with the article, means 'God the Father,' so in the only two or three passages, where it may be considered doubtful, the safest, as well as the most probable and rational mode of construction would be, to construe

them according to what is clearly the meaning in the unambiguous passages, for which we have their authority; instead of making, to suit a particular purpose, a different construction, for which we have no authority at all. In the interpretation of all other writings, we make it a rule without any hesitation, to construe what is difficult, by what is plain, what is doubtful, by what is clear; not obscura per obscuriora, (obscure things by things more obscure); and I am at a loss to discover, why the Scriptures alone are to be treated less fairly and rationally by us, than any other writings.

You will tell me, perhaps, that according to Mr. Sharp and Dr. Middleton's rules for construing the Greek article, the first of these texts must be rendered, 'Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ;' and the second, 'To them that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of our God and Saviour Jesus Christ;' and that they will not admit of the interpretation in the common version. But you must excuse me for saying, that I do not consider the rules laid down by these learned writers to be any authority whatever: I do not know a single Greek scholar, who thinks that they have established their system. The late professor Porson, who was one of the most eminent and accomplished critics in Greek literature, that this or any other country in modern times has produced, considered it

to be without foundation, and though he did not write, as was once supposed, the Letters of Gregory Blunt in answer to Mr. Sharp, they were published with his entire approbation.

It does seem extraordinary, that such a complicated and ponderous system of rules and canons, upon one single part of speech, resembling an immense labyrinth, and occupying in Dr. Middleton's work only, no less than seven hundred pages, should have been first started at the close of the 18th or the beginning of the 19th century. Like many modern structures, however, it required to be propped up, before it was completed; the principal rules requiring numerous subordinate and collateral rules, limitations, exceptions, and anomalies, sometimes also called rules, almost without end, to be invented, as objections which would otherwise have been insuperable, were discovered; and the very props thus applied to support the principal parts of the building, being so unsound and incapable of supporting themselves, as to require assistance in their turn; and yet the whole together not providing for the various cases that occur, nor proving the principal points intended, particularly those relating to the texts in question, notwithstanding the many minute, subtle, fanciful and unfounded distinctions and exceptions, which have been so laboriously accumulated. On the contrary, numerous passages have been produced from Scripture, and other writers, completely at variance with them, and shewing that

they are by no means to be depended upon. This has been successfully proved by the learned author of that masterly criticism upon Dr. Middleton's work in the Monthly Review, vol. 62; and what is more, it has been shewn by Dr. Carpenter, in his "Unitarianism the Doctrine of the Gospel," pp. 367, 370, that whatever may be the value of these supposed rules, the texts in question may be classed among the exceptions, which the learned fabricators of them have been compelled to lay down, to give them any chance of standing at all, which the Monthly Reviewer has I think proved, that even with this assistance, they cannot do. He has shewn too, that the whole mystery of the Greek article might be comprised in a single page. If indeed one part of speech only, and that one of the most inconsiderable,, required such a space to lay down and explain its rules, what a tremendous work would a Greek grammar be, treating all the parts-of speech in the same manner!

Let us endeavour, however, to apply another test to these rules, in order to ascertain their intrinsic value for the purposes of this controversy. Had they been well founded, and known to, and made use of by, the ancient Greek writers, particularly the writers of the New Testament, and their followers during the three succeeding centuries, it is impossible to believe that we should not have had the whole body of the Fathers, who during a considerable part of that period wrote upon the subject of the Trinity, or at least a very

great majority of them, quoting the celebrated texts which are now so confidently referred to according to this new-made system, putting the same construction upon the article, and laying the utmost weight upon it, as these two modern writers do. But will any one pretend to say that this, or any thing like it, was the case? What then is the inference; but that at the periods when they composed their different works which have come down to us, no such rules for the construction of the article were established or thought of, and that such was not in their times the construction of the passages in question?

If Origen had been of opinion, that in these texts God and Christ were intended to be represented as the same person; that  $\Theta_{\xi \circ \zeta}$  with the article was designed to be applied to Christ;—is it possible that he could have said in the passage cited in my former Letter (p. 19), that he who is God of himself (meaning the Father) is  $\delta \Theta_{\xi \circ \zeta}$ , that is, God with the article; but that he who is not God of himself, but is so by partaking of the Divine nature,—such as Christ, the first-born of every creature,—is  $\Theta_{\xi \circ \zeta}$ , that is, God without the article? Could Eusebius and Clemens Alexandrinus have expressed themselves in a similar manner?

Before I conclude my observations, however, upon these two texts, I cannot help remarking, as to 2 Pet. i. 1, that it is most singular, but not more singular than true, that in the very next verse (2 Pet. i. 2,) the same words, as Dr. Clarke (whose language, for we cannot have better, I shall here adopt,) most truly states, "are repeated in such a construction, as determines the sense necessarily, without any ambiguity:  $\varepsilon \pi i \gamma \nu \omega \sigma_{i,\zeta} \tau_{o,\upsilon} \Theta_{\varepsilon o,\upsilon}$ ,  $\kappa \alpha i I \eta \sigma_{o,\upsilon} \tau_{o,\upsilon} K_{\upsilon \rho_i o,\upsilon} \eta \mu \omega \nu$ , 'the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord.' Now since in the second verse these words, the knowledge of God  $(\tau_{o,\upsilon} \Theta_{\varepsilon o,\upsilon})$  and of Jesus our Lord, are in the original placed in such a construction as of necessity to signify God the Father, in contradistinction to Jesus our Lord, it is probable that, in the first verse likewise, these words the righteousness of God  $(\tau_{o,\upsilon} \Theta_{\varepsilon o,\upsilon})$  and our Saviour Jesus Christ, though placed ambiguously in the original, yet were intended in the same manner to signify God the Father, in contradistinction to Jesus our Saviour."

I shall now address myself to the only remaining text you have cited to prove that  $\delta$   $\Theta_{\varepsilon \circ \varsigma}$ , God with the article, is applied to Christ: namely, Tit. iii. 4: "But after that the kindness and love (philanthropy) of our Saviour God towards man appeared." In the original, ' $O_{\tau \varepsilon} \delta_{\varepsilon} \dot{\eta} \chi_{\rho \eta \sigma \tau \circ \tau \eta \varsigma} \kappa_{\alpha i} \dot{\eta} \varphi_{i \lambda \alpha} \delta_{\nu \rho \omega \pi i \alpha} \varepsilon_{\pi \varepsilon} \varphi_{\alpha \nu \varepsilon} \tau_{\alpha \nu} \sigma_{\alpha \tau \eta \rho \circ \varsigma} \dot{\eta}_{\mu \omega \nu} \Theta_{\varepsilon \circ \nu}$ . I am rather surprised that this text should close the catalogue, or even be quoted at all upon this occasion; not only because the article is not prefixed to  $\Theta_{\varepsilon \circ \varsigma}$ , but to  $\sigma_{\omega \tau \eta \rho \circ \varsigma}$ , and omitted before  $\Theta_{\varepsilon \circ \varsigma}$ , which even without taking into consideration the presence of the pronoun  $\dot{\eta}_{\mu \omega \nu}$  would render it of no value for this purpose; but also because it appears so undeniably from the context, that

the words our Saviour God in this text, are spoken of the Father, as contradistinguished from Jesus Christ, who is clearly described as his instrument; that it is extraordinary it should ever have been thought of, to prove them to be the same, or to prove that Jesus Christ was God, from whom he is so manifestly distinguished. Let us take the whole passage together, which is as follows: "But after that the kindness and love of our Saviour God towards man appeared, not by works of righteousness, which we have done, but according to his (that is God's) mercy, he (that is God) saved us by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Spirit; which he (still meaning God) shed abroad on us abundantly,  $\delta_{i\alpha}$ , that is, 'through,' or 'by the instrumentality of,' (which is the meaning of  $\delta_{i\alpha}$ ,) Jesus Christ our Saviour." Upon any other occasion than that of proving the doctrine of the Trinity, who would ever suppose for a moment, that God our Saviour and Jesus Christ our Saviour were the same? without which the passage is no proof that Jesus Christ our Saviour is God. What is there to induce us to suppose them the same, but that each is called our Saviour? But this is no proof of identity, as each might have been our Saviour in different characters, or senses, or upon different occasions. But this is even weaker than if it stood merely upon calling each of them our Saviour; as it proceeds to state, that one saved us by the instrumentality of the other. If a

powerful monarch were to send one of his generals, at the head of an army, to save an invaded country, and he were to accomplish the ends of his mission, by defeating and expelling the enemy, the people of that country would be very likely to hail the conquering general as their saviour and deliverer. They would also, when their attention was directed to the sovereign by whose favour he was sent upon this gracious mission, be just as likely to call him their saviour likewise, who had saved and delivered them through, or by the instrumentality of, his victorious general and army: yet we should feel somewhat astonished, if we were to be gravely told, that we must consider this to be proof, that the general and his sovereign were the same.

Having now taken notice of, and animadverted upon, every text you have produced to prove that  $\Theta_{\epsilon o \varsigma}$  with the article is applied to Christ, I must say, that it appears to me that you have failed in every one of them. As it is applied with the article to the Father only, so clearly and decidedly hundreds of times, and in almost every page of the New Testament, I should have expected one text at least to have been quoted, in which it could have been shewn to have been applied with equal clearness and certainty to Jesus Christ:—but none such has been produced. There is not one of them but must be admitted, under the most favourable view that can be taken of it, to be of an extremely doubtful nature, to say the least, and therefore to be totally unfit to be received as proof.

Such uncertain and ambiguous passages would not, in any other controversy, be admitted to prove the most trifling point of any kind, but would at once be allowed to be no authority either way, even if there were more of them, and they stood alone: but with hundreds of clear and plain instances of the term being applied to another person, and to that other only, with the opinions of some of the most eminent of the early Fathers, and not denied by their contemporaries that it is applied to that other only,—that the Father only is God with the article, and that Christ in particular is God without the article; to require us to consider these texts as proofs, that the latter is God with the article, is very much like calling upon us to surrender our understandings at discretion.

I shall now demonstrate to you how clearly and unequivocally the term  $\delta$   $\Theta_{\delta \mathcal{O}_{\delta}}$  is applied by the apostles and evangelists to the Father: to do which I am under no difficulty where to find my proofs, as you have been, without succeeding at last; but have to select a few out of multitudes, which, like the stars in the firmament, present themselves to me wherever I turn my eyes, throughout the whole of the New Testament. I shall begin with 1 John, chap. iv. ver. 6—16, because it furnishes in itself a most complete and brilliant constellation of such proofs: "We are of God ( $\varepsilon_{\mathcal{K}}$   $\tau_{\mathcal{O}\mathcal{V}}$   $\Theta_{\varepsilon\mathcal{O}\mathcal{V}}$ , of God with the article): he that knoweth God ( $\tau_{\mathcal{O}\mathcal{V}}$   $\Theta_{\varepsilon\mathcal{O}\mathcal{V}}$ , God with the article) heareth us. He that is not of God ( $\varepsilon_{\mathcal{K}}$   $\tau_{\mathcal{O}\mathcal{V}}$   $\Theta_{\varepsilon\mathcal{O}\mathcal{V}}$ , of

God with the article) heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error. Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God (en του Occu, of God with the article); and every one that loveth is born of God (sk Tov Osov, of God with the article), and knoweth God (TOV OSOV, God with the article). He that loveth not knoweth not God (TOV Θεον, God with the article); for God (δ Θεος, God with the article) is love. In this was manifested the love of God (του Θεου, of God with the article) towards us, because that God (6 Osos, God with the article) sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. Herein is love, not that we loved God (TOV Seov, God with the article), but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for mercy seat) for our sins. Beloved, if God (6 Osos, God with the article) so loved us, we ought also to love one another. No man hath seen God (TOV OSOV, God with the article) at any time. If we love one another, God (6 Deos, God with the article) dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us. Hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his spirit. And we have seen, and do testify that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world. Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God (TOU OEOU, of God with the article), God (6 Ocos, God with the article) dwelleth in him, and he in God (εν τω Θεω, in God with the article). And we have known and believed the love

that God ( Osos, God with the article) hath to us. God ( $\delta \Theta_{\mathcal{E}OS}$ , God with the article) is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God (εν τω Θεω, in God with the article), and God ( & Osos, God with the article) in him." Here we find, in the short compass of eleven verses, twenty-one clear, distinct, and undisputed instances, of the term  $\delta \Theta_{\epsilon o \varsigma}$ , absolutely, and unequivocally, being applied to the Father; and, what is more, applied to him as contradistinguished from Christ his Son. So in John's Gospel, iii. 16, we meet with: "For God ( O Soc, God with the article) so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son." Again, in John iii. 17: "For God (6 Ozos, God with the article) sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world." Id. ver. 34: "For he whom God ( $\delta$   $\Theta_{\epsilon 0 \zeta}$ , God with the article) hath sent, speaketh the words of God (700 Ocov, of God with the article); for God (6 Ocos, God with the article) giveth not the spirit by measure to him." Acts ii. 22: "Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God (700 9500, of God with the article) by miracles, and wonders, and signs, which God ( $\delta \Theta_{\epsilon 0 \zeta}$ , God with the article) did by him." Id. ver. 32, 33: "This Jesus hath God (6 Deos, God with the article) raised up, whereof we are all witnesses. Therefore, being by the right hand of God (TOV OEOV, of God with the article) exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the holy spirit, he hath shed forth this, which ye

now see and hear." Acts iii. 26: "Unto you first, God ( $\delta \Theta_{\varepsilon \circ \varsigma}$ , God with the article), having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities." Rom. v. 10: "For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God ( $\tau \omega \Theta_{\varepsilon \omega}$ , to God with the article) by the death of his Son." Rom. viii. 3: "For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God ( $\delta \Theta_{\varepsilon \circ \varsigma}$ , God with the article) sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh." Rom. viii. 31, 32: "If God ( $\delta \Theta_{\varepsilon \circ \varsigma}$ , God with the article) be for us, who can be against us? He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?"

Having produced these instances, which are between thirty and forty, out of many hundreds, there being but few pages in the sacred writings which do not furnish more, I again challenge you to produce a single instance, in which this term has ever been clearly, unequivocally and absolutely, applied to the Son, as it is in the passages I have just quoted to the Father. How is it, that our Trinitarian friends, who with so little ceremony, so little care to be correct, confidently pronounce, that every name, title and attribute, given to the Father, is applied to the Son,—cannot furnish one solitary example of this, amongst others, ever having been distinctly, clearly, and absolutely applied to him? How happens it, that with the learning

and information you so eminently possess, you have, in every instance in which you have attempted it, so remarkably failed? Does not this speak volumes?

Had you succeeded, however, I should not have expected the observation you next make, "that as a great part of my remarks on John x. go on the supposition that \( \delta \in \text{0} \in \text{0} \in \text{0} \in \text{is never applied to Christ, you} \) consider what you have said as an answer." Is it possible, my dear Sir, that I can look upon that to be an answer, which does not touch the main point of my argument? which leaves what I conceive to be the strongest part of it entirely unnoticed? namely, our Lord's comment upon the charge made against him by the Jews; his statement of what he considered them as having charged him with, and his own explanation of the sense in which HE meant to be understood by what he said, so contrary to the sense which the Trinitarians have put upon his words to render them favourable to their system. This therefore, which is the material and essential part, stands without an answer; and the passage, unless some satisfactory answer could be given, must be considered, as I have already observed, to be in direct opposition to, instead of being in favour of, the Trinitarian doctrine.

Instead of directing your attention principally to this, you have confined yourself to a subordinate and collateral point, which arose incidentally, merely from my translating in my first Letter,  $\Theta_{\epsilon\sigma\nu}$  God, or  $\alpha$  God,

in the disjunctive, without laying any stress upon it at the time; and it has grown to its present magnitude, in consequence of your supposing that there was no foundation for the latter translation, and opposing it as a vulnerable point; though the event has proved very different from what you appear to have expected.

You next observe; "that my additional remarks on the Saviour being sanctified, (p. 21,) seem to arise from my not adverting to an use of the term sanctify in the Old Testament, from which it is derived; that where it is applied to subjects incapable of moral impurity,—as the Saviour, and the vessels of the sanctuary,—it signifies 'to set apart to a peculiar use;' that in this sense the apostles apply to Jesus Christ, what Isaiah says, 'Sanctify the Lord of Hosts, and he shall be a stumbling block to the house of Israel;' and that we know that Christ was to the Jews a stumbling block."

It does not appear to me what advantage you can derive from this construction of the word sanctify; inasmuch as the setting apart of any subject for peculiar, and those sacred, uses, must either mean the consecration of it for such uses, or the separation of it from other persons, or things, for those uses. Now the first means the same thing, or nearly the same, as 'sanctify,' or 'make holy,' and may, as you observe, be applied to subjects incapable of moral impurity: but notwithstanding, they may, till consecrated,

or sanctified, be ceremonially unconsecrated, or unsanctified, and not be reckoned among the number of holy things dedicated to sacred uses; as the gift mentioned Matth. xxiii. 19, though incapable of moral impurity, was ceremonially unconsecrated, and not a sanctified or holy thing till placed upon the altar by which it was consecrated, or sanctified. So our Saviour-being, according to the Unitarian, and as I conceive the scriptural, view of him upon this occasion, a man of the tribe of Judah, a tribe not dedicated to the priesthood, till he was consecrated, or sanctified by the Father, to be sent into the world, that he might exercise a perpetual priesthood for all mankind,-may be considered as having been till then ceremonially unconsecrated, or unsanctified. But according to the Trinitarian hypothesis, it was the divine Logos before he was united to a human nature, and sent into the world, who was in every respect equal to the Father, and who must have been from all eternity most holy, as holy as the Father himself, and have required no consecration, or sanctification, to qualify him for all sacred and religious purposes whatever; that was not only sent, which in itself implies inferiority, but was also sanctified or consecrated by the Father, and by the Father only, leaving the Holy Ghost (who is according to that hypothesis considered the sanctifier) quite out of the question; which is not only irreconcileable with the Trinitarian system itself, but is destitute of all evidence.

The only other meaning of sanctifying, construed

as setting apart any subject for peculiar, and those sacred, uses, is the separation of it from other persons or things. But how could one person, who according to the Trinitarian theory was infinite, and must have filled infinite space, have been separated from another person, nay from two other persons, each of whom likewise was infinite, and filled infinite space?

—and what proof have we of this?

Neither the one construction nor the other constitutes any difficulty upon Unitarian principles. Whether the meaning of sanctified be 'consecrated,' or 'set apart,' or according to the plain and ordinary sense of it, 'made holy,' the Unitarian considers, that the Father, previous to the commencement of the glorious ministry of the man Christ Jesus, consecrated him, or made him holy, or, if you please, set him apart for the purposes of his most important office, and sent him into the world—that is, amongst mankind—to discharge the duties of it, and to preach the glad tidings of his Gospel.

I can by no means subscribe to your representation, that it is in this sense of sanctifying—that is, of setting the subject sanctified apart to a peculiar use—the apostles apply to Jesus Christ, what Isaiah says, "Sanctify the Lord of Hosts, and he shall be a stumbling block to the house of Israel;" adding, that we know that Christ was a stumbling block to the Jews; and thence inferring, I suppose, that Christ was the Lord of Hosts. You do not inform me where this

application is made by the apostles; but as I can find nothing about a stumbling block, either in Isaiah, or in any of the Apostolic writings, except in Rom. xi. 9, and Rev. ii. 14, (the former of which refers to Psal. lxix. 22, and the latter to Numb. xxxi. 16, and neither of them to Isaiah, or to Christ,) I take it for granted, that you allude to the stumbling stone mentioned in Isaiah viii. 13 and xxviii. 16, and referred to in Rom. ix. 23, and 1 Pet. ii. 5-8. Now nothing can be more evident, than that Isaiah (viii. 13) does not by the word sanctify mean setting apart the subject to be sanctified to a peculiar use; as he is addressing himself to the people, beginning at verse the 9th: and he says, ver. 13, "Sanctify (thereby directing the people to sanctify) the Lord of Hosts, and let him be your fear, and let him be your dread:" for the Messiah (supposing him to have been alluded to in this place, which I contend he was not) was not set apart to his great office by the Jewish people, but by the Father; and, according to the Trinitarian interpretation of John x., before his supposed divine nature was united to his human nature; which is another reason why the people could have had nothing to do with the setting him apart for it, and consequently why he (the Son) could not have been alluded to in this passage, even upon their own hypothesis.

It is quite plain, that the word sanctify is here used in a totally different sense, and that "the sancti-

fying of the Lord of Hosts by the people," means, not that they (the people) should set apart the Lord of Hosts to a peculiar use—the idea of which is monstrous; but that they should honour, reverence, or glorify him; in which sense it is used Numb. xx. 12: "And the Lord spake unto Moses and Aaron, Because ye believed me not, to sanctify me in the eyes of the children of Israel, therefore ye shall not bring this congregation into the land which I have given them." So in Levit. x. 3,—immediately after the destruction of Nadab and Abihu, for offering strange fire before the Lord, which he commanded them not to do,-it is said: "Then Moses said unto Aaron, This is that which the Lord spake, I will be sanctified in them that come nigh me, and before all the people I will be glorified."

After having exhorted the people to sanctify the Lord of Hosts himself, and to let him be their fear, and to let him be their dread, the prophet Isaiah proceeds to say, ver. 14: "And he (that is, the Lord of Hosts) shall be for a sanctuary; but for a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, to both the houses of Israel; for a gin, and for a snare, to the inhabitants of Jerusalem." Here it is clearly stated, that the Lord of Hosts himself shall be for a stumbling stone, and a rock of offence to both the houses of Israel; which was precisely the case: for though he was peculiarly their God, and they his people, having been first made a nation by him, and afterwards preserved and deliver-

ed by such stupendous displays of his miraculous power, and placed under his peculiar government, with ·laws given to them by himself; yet, as their history sufficiently shews, he was for a stumbling stone and rock of offence to them, as they were continually offending against him by their repeated acts of disobedience and rebellion, and stumbling against, and falling by, his laws, when they for sook him, and addicted themselves to the service of other Gods. This happened as to both the houses of Israel, as well to those tribes which retained their allegiance to the family of David, as to those which revolted from them; both having frequently renounced their subjection to the Most High, and fallen into the most deplorable idolatry. But this only proves that the Lord of Hosts was to be for a stumbling stone and a rock of offence to both houses of Israel: there is not a word in allusion to Christ in the whole passage. What proof is there then, that he was the person here called the Lord of Hosts? You say, that we know that Jesus Christ was to the Jews a stumbling block. Granted: but might there not have been, as has been very judiciously remarked, more stumbling blocks or stumbling stones to the Jews than one? - and might not the same language have been applied to God, and to Christ, in very different senses, and in regard to very different events? Supposing the Lord of Hosts to have been a stumbling block, and Jesus Christ also to have been

a stumbling block, to this rebellious and gainsaying people,—would it be more rational to proceed at once to the conclusion, Therefore Christ is the Lord of Hosts? than to syllogize in a similar manner: Jupiter is a planet, and the earth is a planet, therefore the earth is Jupiter? How extraordinary it is, that this admirable reasoning should be rejected in astronomy, when it is adopted so generally, and so usefully, in religious controversy!

I shall prove with the greatest facility, from the Scriptures themselves, that the Jews had more stumbling blocks, or stumbling stones, than one. In Rom. ix. 31, 32, we have these words: "But Israel, which followed after the law of righteousness, hath not attained to the law of righteousness. Wherefore? Because they sought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law: for they stumbled at that stumbling stone," meaning the law. And thus the law appears to have been one stumbling stone; which also explains that the Lord of Hosts might figuratively be said to have been a stumbling stone to them by, or through, his law which he had given to them, and which they had stumbled at, and disobeyed. In Rev. ii. 14, are these words: "But I have a few things against thee, because thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balak to cast a stumbling block before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication." Here we find that the children of Israel had another stumbling block. How many more they may have had, it is not material to ascertain.

Let us proceed in the next place to inquire, how far the apostles apply, as you inform me they do, to Jesus Christ, what Isaiah says: "Sanctify the Lord of Hosts, and he shall be a stumbling block to the house of Israel." It so happens, that neither of the apostles quotes at all the words "sanctify the Lord of Hosts." The apostle Paul, after having stated, Rom. ix. 31, 32, (which I have just cited,) that the Jews stumbled at the stumbling stone of the law, continues, ver. 33: "As it is written, Behold, I lay in Zion a stumbling stone, and rock of offence; and whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed." By these additional words, which are not to be found in Isaiah viii. 13, 14, the apostle, if he designed to represent Christ as the stumbling stone that was laid, equally designed to represent God, or the Lord of Hosts, to have been the person who laid it, and consequently to have been different from the stone that was laid by him.

The apostle Peter, 1st Epist. ii. 6, says: "Wherefore also it is contained in the Scripture, Behold, I lay in Zion a chief corner stone, elect, precious; and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded:" which appears to be a quotation not from Isaiah viii. 14, but rather from Isaiah xxviii. 16, which is in these words: "Therefore thus saith the Lord God; Behold.

I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, elect, precious, a sure foundation. He that believeth shall not make haste." The apostle then says, in his own person, to the disciples to whom his epistle was addressed; "Unto you therefore which believe, he is precious; but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, is become the chief stone of the corner, and a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, even to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient; whereunto they were appointed." Considering Christ to be here meant, nothing more follows from it, than this:- Isaiah had said that the Lord of Hosts should be for a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, to both houses of Israel; and the apostle Peter says, that Christ had become a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence; and each might have been a stone of stumbling to the Jews, without being one and the same: that is, the one under the old dispensation, and the other under the new; the one by the law which he had given; and the other by the gospel which he had preached to them: or the one, because they rejected him as their God, and went and served other Gods; and the other, because they rejected him also as their Messiah, and chose to continue under that inferior and burdensome dispensation, from which it was the object of his mission, and the design of his heavenly Father, to relieve them. Neither the prophet nor the apostles have intimated that

they were the same. The latter indeed say nothing about the Lord of Hosts, upon this occasion. This therefore supplies no proof of their identity. In fact, it is one of the most common occurrences in all writings sacred and profane, where one eminent person is mentioned, who in some points resembled another who preceded him, or who performed similar actions, or met with similar treatment, in giving an account, or writing the history, of the latter, to allude to the former in words more or less express or direct, without the slightest intention to insinuate that they were the same, any more than the apostles do, in the passage in question: and all that can be inferred from them is, that the Lord of Hosts was a stumbling stone to the Jews, and that Christ also was a stumbling stone to them.-To conclude my remarks upon this subject, which I am afraid have already extended to an inconvenient length, I shall merely observe, that as we are carefully to avoid placing stumbling blocks in the way of others, I hope we shall also take some care, not unnecessarily to create any for ourselves.

You further say, "that as to the superiority of him that sanctifies, it is proclaimed by Trinitarians, that this was the glory of Jesus Christ, that he voluntarily condescended to the condition of a servant; that in proportion as he stooped, and placed himself in an inferior condition, the Father, who never thus stooped, must be superior; that this also sufficiently accounts for the Saviour's saying, 'The Father is greater than I.'

But this, you tell me, proves nothing against his original dignity; for that the same person may be my inferior in one relation, and my superior, or equal, in another; that when I urge the inferiority of Christ, his submission, &c. you wonder that I do not recollect, that those who are called orthodox, are so far from denying this, that they derive all their hope of salvation from the merit of this voluntary submission, and obedience: but that you contend, that the Scriptures very distinctly declare Christ to have possessed original glory, which he voluntarily laid aside; and that after having passed through a state of humiliation, he received a new and peculiar glory, in the new nature he had assumed, for which you quote Philipp. ii."

I perfectly agree with you, my dear Sir, that Christ voluntarily condescended to the condition of a servant (or rather slave, as it is in the original); but deny that it is because he stooped, and placed himself in an inferior condition, that the Father, who never thus stooped, must be superior; which must be the proposition to answer your purpose. I deny also, that this accounts for the Saviour's saying, "The Father is greater than I." The whole of this proceeds upon the assumption, without any kind of evidence, that our Lord was originally equal to the Father, and possessed of equal power and glory; and that from this transcendently high station he condescended to the condition of a slave. But where are your proofs of this? Our blessed Lord himself never says so, nor

do any of his apostles. Though Trinitarians may proclaim it, those who are not Trinitarians will not believe it, unless it is substantiated by evidence. And supposing that it would, if clearly and satisfactorily proved, account for our Lord's saying "My Father is greater than I," against the obvious and plain meaning of the words themselves,—until it is so proved, it amounts to nothing, and can account for nothing. Now have you, or has any Trinitarian, been able to find any such evidence? If you have, how easy would it be to produce it!

I admit that these words do not furnish any direct proof against any original dignity which our Lord might before have had, and did not then possess, supposing such to have been the case. This, however, being the very point in question, cannot be taken for granted; and there is no proof in favour of it. As far as the words themselves go, they shew that our Lord was then inferior to the Father; and no antecedent or original dignity at all, much less any equal to that of the Father, is mentioned, or so much as alluded to.

Moreover, whatever the words "The Father is greater than I" may not prove, they certainly do prove that, at the time they were spoken, the Father was greater than our Saviour, taking him as he then was. If, therefore, he was then a person, consisting, as the Trinitarians say, of two natures inseparably united in him, the one a divine nature, equal to that of the Father, and the other a human nature, which, how-

ever inferior, must be allowed to have been something, this, being added to that which was equal to the Father, must have made him even something more than the Father: and yet, according to this hypothesis, unless our Lord's own words are rejected, the Father must have been greater than he, who was not only equal to, but something more than, himself-than which nothing can be more inconsistent: and it must be remembered, that he says generally, and absolutely, "The Father is greater than I," speaking of himself wholly, and entirely, and not by parts and parcels, a mode of speaking of himself which he has never been shewn to have adopted. Though confessedly inferior then, at this time, that he was ever before in possession of original, and equal dignity, remains to be proved. Every presumption is against it; and the proof, if any could be produced, would lie entirely upon you. It would be highly unreasonable to expect me, or any other person, to take for granted one of the most material things in dispute between us.

I admit that the same person may be an inferior in one relation, and a superior in another: but still, particularly as he has pronounced himself to be inferior without any reservation or limitation whatever, you have the one thing needful to establish; namely, that he is, or ever was, in any relation, equal to the Father.

The merit of his voluntary submission and obedience was undoubtedly great, and deserving of all that the sacred writers have said of it; but they do not inform us that it was the submission and obedience of one equal to him whom he submitted to and obeyed. Whatever therefore they who call themselves orthodox may fancy it is necessary to amount to for their salvation, proves nothing. I think they are wrong in this too, and that if it were requisite to enter upon it in this place, it could be very satisfactorily proved that they are.

Where, my good friend, do the Scriptures say that our blessed Lord had original glory equal to that of the Father-which is necessary to make out your case -or any glory, that was not derived from that only original and underived Being, the Father and Author of all? Where do they distinctly declare Christ, as you have stated, to have possessed original glory? The passage in the 2d chapter of the Epistle to the Philippians, which you cite, and which I shall presently consider, contains nothing like it. Our Lord himself, instead of claiming original or underived glory, is continually representing himself as owing to, and deriving from, the Father, all the powers, privileges, and prerogatives he possessed; saying expressly, that he could do nothing of himself; that it was the Father who had committed all judgement to him, that men might honour him; that it was the Father who had given to him to have life in himself, and who had given to him authority to execute judgement; that he sought not his own will, but the will of his Father who had sent him:

John v. 19, 22, 26, 27, 30. That his doctrine was not his own, but his that sent him: John vii. 16. That his Father who had sent him had given him a commandment what he should say, and what he should speak: John xii. 49. That the Father that dwelt in him, he did the works: John xiv. 10. Where he ever speaks of original or underived glory, still less of glory equal to that of his Father, I am utterly unable to discover.

Perhaps you may consider the 17th chapter of St. John, ver. 5, as containing something like it; where our Lord, praying to his Father, says: "And now, O Father, glorify thou me, with thine own self, with the glory which I had with thee (παρα σοι) before the world was:" which some possibly may think proves that he had original glory, and that he was in the actual possession of it before the world was. But he afterwards shews in the very same chapter, ver. 22, that his glory, whatever the nature of it was, had been given to him by his Father; and that the very same glory which had been given to him, he had given to his disciples, probably the glory of promulgating the Gospel, the glad tidings of life and immortality, to the world. Nothing, I am persuaded, can be proved, even as to our Lord's preexistence, from the words "The glory which I had with thee, before the world was;" the Greek word  $\pi\alpha\rho\alpha$ , with the dative case, not always having a local, but sometimes a personal signification, when it denotes in the sight, or estima-

tion, of; as in 2 Pet. iii. 8: "One day is with the Lord (παρα Κυριω, that is, in the sight, or estimation, of the Lord) as a thousand years;" which likewise frequently does not represent the thing as actually present, or in possession; but merely as foreseen, as in John viii. 56, where our Lord says: "Your Father Abraham rejoiced to see my day. He saw it, and was glad:" that is, he foresaw it, which is analogous to another interpretation, which the words will very well bear; namely, that having it with God, means having it in the design, purpose, or counsel, of God, to whom the past, present, and future, are always present, "who calleth those things which be not, as though they were;" Rom. iv. 17: having told Abraham that he had made him the father of many nations, when as yet he had but one child, and that not the child of promise: Gen. xvii. 5. Such expressions, therefore, cannot be relied upon, as denoting that the things mentioned had actual existence at the time specified. Other instances of it may easily be given from the Scriptures. Thus, for example, our Lord himself is called (Rev. xiii. 8) "the lamb that was slain before the foundation of the world;" when he could only have been so in the view and design of the Supreme Being, with whom the thing was equally present as if it had been actually accomplished. So the dead, who will not live again till the future resurrection, are stated by our Lord as being all living to God: Luke xx. 38. So likewise in this very chapter of St. John

(ver. 12), Judas is said to be destroyed (απωλετο), though he was then living, and actually bargaining with the priests and rulers to betray his Master.

I am much obliged to you for having quoted the passage in the 2d chapter of the Epistle to the Philippians, because we shall have the apostle Paul's account of the state from which our blessed Lord stooped, as you say, when he took upon him the form of a slave, which will furnish us with an opportunity of ascertaining whether it was from a state of original underived glory, equal to that of the Father, or something differing from it toto calo; and because I am much mistaken if this celebrated passage, so often cited in favour of the Trinitarian hypothesis, will not, when it has been carefully examined, turn out, like so many others, to be decidedly hostile to it.

To render it available for Trinitarian purposes, we must inflexibly adhere to the common version; for the Greek text shews us at the first glance, that it will admit of other interpretations, at least equal, and, as I trust I shall be able to prove to you, on many accounts much superior, to those adopted in this version. I must premise, however, as I have already done upon other occasions, that to amount to a proof of such a doctrine as that of the Trinity, or indeed of any doctrine, it must not only admit of, but require, the translation resorted to in the common version. If it does not, it is no proof one way or the other; which is all that is incumbent upon me to shew: for to prove

the doctrine of the divine unity I need it not, there being numerous proofs of that doctrine, most full and clear and conclusive, without in the least straining any of the words in which it is expressed, but taking them all in their obvious and usual meanings. Many of these you will find in the preceding parts of this letter.—I shall now offer to your consideration some of the interpretations which this celebrated passage will admit of, at least equally well with those in the common version.

It was the apostle's design, in this chapter of his Epistle, to recommend humility to his Philippian brethren, by that bright example of it which had been exhibited by the Lord Jesus; for which purpose he says to them, ver. 3, 4: "Let nothing be done through strife or vain-glory; but in lowliness of mind, esteeming others better than yourselves. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others." Then comes the passage in question, ver. 5-11: "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus; who, being in the form of a God," (for thus, being Occa without the article, it may, according to the strictest construction of the Greek and English languages, be equally well rendered, as God; and it is only from a consideration of the context, of the general scope and design of the writer, and of the application of the word in other places, that it can be determined which ought to be adopted in preference,) "thought it not robbery to be equal" (supposing the

common version to be correct in this respect) "to a God" (Ofou, again without the article): "but emptied himself" (meaning evidently of this equality to a God; the words in the common version, "made himself of no reputation," having nothing better to rest upon than the fancy of the translator), "taking upon him the form of a slave, and was" (for so y ενομένος may be rendered, as well as 'was made') "in the likeness of men," or other men, or common men. See Judges xvi. 7, 11, 17; where it is so rendered, and very properly, even in the common version; though the word other, or another, is not in the original, where we see Sampson divesting, or emptying, himself of his miraculous powers, by revealing the secret upon which they depended, to a perfidious woman, and suffering himself to be deprived of his hair, after having before told her, by way of putting her off, that if he were to be bound with seven green withs, he should be weak, and be as a man, (rendered very properly, according to its real meaning, as another man,) and that if he was bound with new ropes, he should be weak, and be as a man (meaning, as it is rendered, as another man). See also Psal. Ixxxii. 6: "And being found in external appearance" (which is the meaning of  $\sigma_{\chi\eta\mu\alpha}$ , as well as fashion, the latter indeed having nearly the same meaning) "as another man;" (that ώς αν- $\theta_{\rho\omega\pi\sigma\sigma}$  may be so rendered, see above) "he humbled. himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross; wherefore God" (here the Father

is first introduced, and he is at once called  $\delta$   $\Theta \varepsilon o \varsigma$ , God with the article) "also hath highly exalted him; and given him a name, which is above every name, that in the name ( $\varepsilon v \tau \omega o v o \mu \alpha \tau \iota$ ) of Jesus every knee should bow, of beings in heaven, and earth, and under the earth, and that every tongue should confess, that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory"—not of himself, though at the time the apostle was writing he was in his highest state of exaltation, nor of the Holy Spirit; but "of God the Father."

According to this translation, the 6th, 7th, and 8th verses, which are the most material, will run thus; "Who, being in the form of a God, thought it not robbery to be equal to a God; but emptied himself, taking upon him the form of a slave, and was in the likeness of other men; and being found in external appearance like another man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross."

The rendering of  $\Theta_{EOS}$ , without the article, a God, in the inferior sense of it, which is here adopted, harmonizes completely with our Lord's intimation in the 10th chapter of St. John, that it might be applied to him in this sense; and in no part of Scripture is it stated that it may be applied to him in any other sense. There our Lord, in his discourse with the Jews, intimates to them, that he should have been justified in making himself a God, in the sense in which that term was applied to those to whom the

word of God came, that is the prophets. Here the apostle, probably with a view to the same discourse, states our Lord's being in the form of a God, and that he thought it not robbery to be equal to a God, which it unquestionably would not have been, even supposing the words "thought it not robbery to be equal to" exhibit a correct representation of the meaning of the original.

Now what is meant by his being in the form, or appearance, of a God, according to his own interpretation of the term used in its inferior sense; but that he was in the form, or appearance, or resemblance, of one of those prophets, or divine messengers of old, to whom the word of God came, performing, as they did, miracles, and signs, and wonders, which constituted the strongest point of resemblance between them, having in fact wrought a very signal miracle,—that of giving sight to a man who had been born blind,-but just before he signified his being entitled to the appellation of a God in this inferior sense? Being then actually in the form of a God, that is of a prophet, manifested by his performing miracles like a prophet, he thought it not robbery to be equal to a God, that is, a prophet endued with miraculous powers; which we can have no difficulty in believing. This brings us to the consideration of the state from which the apostle appears to have considered him as having stooped: and it is obvious, that the state from which the apostle considered him to have stooped, was that

which he had just described, namely, that of a prophet, or divine messenger; and that he thus stooped, by emptying himself of, or laying aside, his miraculous powers, and exercising none of them for his own defence or deliverance.

But to this it may justly be objected, and the objection will apply equally, whether the words be translated, "thought it not robbery to be equal to 'God,' or 'a God';" that it was the apostle's design upon this occasion to hold up our Lord as a perfect pattern of humility for the imitation of his Philippian friends; and yet upon this construction, the very first proof he represents him as giving of it, is his thinking it not robbery to be equal to God or a God. Considering him to have been so,—and there is no doubt that he was so in the latter sense, -his making such a claim himself, though a just one, would have been no proof of humility, and consequently could never have found any place in an enumeration of what he thought, said, and did, by way of shewing his humility as an example to others. Had it been given as what the apostle thought of him, or represented him to be,as his being in the form of God or a God is, just before, -the case would have been different; but the apostle, according to the common version, is supposed to produce it as the first proof of his humility, that he himself thought it not robbery to be equal with God. We must consequently give up the rendering of that version in this respect likewise, for

some more consistent meaning, which the original will admit of. I prefer therefore translating the word, άρπαγμον, a prey, as has been done by numerous eminent critics both Trinitarian and Antitrinitarian, meaning a thing obtained by his own power or talent, and to be retained and used as his own property, and for his own benefit. I prefer also translating the word wa, like to, an interpretation which it will as well admit of as that of equal with. See Dr. Whitby, Archbishop Newcome, and Schleusner in loc. The passage may then be translated, "Who being in the form, or appearance," (for such is the meaning of the word  $\mu o \rho \phi \eta$ , as may be seen in the very next verse,) "of a God," (which he was, by performing miracles, as they had done to whom the word of God came, and who were called Gods,) "did not esteem it a prey, to be like to a God; but emptied, or divested himself of it, taking upon him the form of a slave, and was in the likeness of other men; and being found in external appearance like another man, humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross."

This translation is perfectly consistent in every part. It exhibits our Lord throughout as a perfect pattern of humility. It accords perfectly with his own representation of himself in other places. It gives us the antithesis where we should expect it, and where the word *but* is inserted to introduce it; namely, that he did not esteem it a prey to be like to a God; but

on the contrary emptied himself of it, that is of this likeness to a God, which he did by abstaining from the performance of all miracles when brought before the superior powers of the country, who were to determine upon his life or death, and the manner in which the latter was to take place. He took upon him the form, or appearance [μορΦην again] of a slave, when he suffered himself to be bound as a slave, to be condemned as a slave to a servile death, namely that of crucifixion, to bear his cross as a slave, and to be crucified as a slave. By his abstinence from working miracles when before the public tribunals of his country, he was like another man, or like a common person; and was found in fashion, or in external appearance, like another man, or a common person, and not like a prophet, or a God, according to Jewish phraseology, exercising the power of working miracles. So he was found by the priests in the council, before whom he performed no miracle: so he was found by Pilate; and so was he found by Herod, who was at first rejoiced to see him, expecting to have beheld some miracle wrought by him; but being disappointed, and finding him in fashion, or appearance, like any other common person, despised him, and with his men of war set him at naught, and sent him back to Pilate.

All this our blessed Lord voluntarily submitted himself to, divesting himself of the form or appearance of a God, or divine messenger, by wholly abstaining from the exercise of any miraculous powers

upon these occasions; humbling himself, and becoming obedient unto death, even the death of the cross; because he knew that it was his duty, being according to the wise designs and purposes of his heavenly Father. That it was voluntary, he himself intimates, Matt. xxvi. 53, saying to one of his disciples, who in his zeal to serve him had availed himself of one of the weapons of temporal warfare; "Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels?" By which also he informs us in what manner he might have delivered himself in this distressing hour, had it been consistent with his Father's will, and his own ideas of duty: not by exercising the powers of any supposed superhuman nature, not by breaking forth upon his enemies with all the glories and splendors of the supposed divine Logos, and consuming them in a moment; not by displaying any one power of his own;—but by praying to the Father, by praying, as an inferior to a superior being, for that necessary assistance which he stood so much in need of, to rescue him from a situation of the utmost distress and danger, out of which he was utterly unable to deliver himself by any power of his own.

From what state then, under all the circumstances, can we suppose the apostle to have considered our Lord as having stooped? Was it from a state of original glory, equal to that of the Father in a pre-existent state, as you in common with other Trinitarians

seem to suppose? There is not a single expression in the whole passage that speaks of, or has any allusion to, a pre-existent state. The whole appears to relate to the voluntary humiliation of our Lord at the time he delivered himself up to his enemies. This will account for every tittle of what the apostle says, and will account for it in a plain and rational manner. But what will be the consequence of supposing, without any authority from the apostle's account of the matter, that the voluntary humiliation of our Lord was a voluntary humiliation of himself when in a preexistent state of glory equal to that of the Father? It will unavoidably follow, that Christ Jesus was in a pre-existent state of glory; for the apostle speaks of Christ Jesus throughout: but it was never pretended by any one that Jesus was ever in a pre-existent state of glory, whatever may have been the case with the supposed divine Logos. It will follow also-as the divine nature was the only part of him then in existence, and was the only part of him that could be humbled by becoming a man—that it was the divine nature that emptied himself, taking upon him the form of a slave, and was made in the likeness of men; that it was the divine nature—who is supposed by the Trinitarians to have created, and to uphold and govern the universe—that was found in fashion as a man; that humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross, that is, actually died; that it was the divine nature, which could not

possibly be raised higher than it was before, that God (δ Θεος, God with the article) highly exalted, and gave him a name above every name: for the apostle proceeds in his enumeration of all the particulars as he had begun, applying the whole to the same being, or nature, he began with; not making any distinction, as a person who had heard of, and believed in, the two natures would naturally have done between the one nature and the other, and shewing what had been done by the one and what by the other. But the words of the apostle give no countenance to the hypothesis from which all these sad consequences flow. He hints at no pre-existent state, alludes to no superhuman nature: he confines every thing that he enumerates to Jesus Christ, which the supposed divine nature could not have been in a pre-existent state; and refers back to no period of time antecedent to that of his taking upon himself the servile character, and submitting to be put to death by sinful men, as had been appointed concerning him in the councils of his Father.

Some, as I have already hinted, translate the 6th verse: "Who being in the form of God, did not esteem it a prey to be like God." The editors of the improved version of the New Testament render it: "Who being in the form of God, did not esteem as a prey this resemblance of God." Others: "Who being in the form of God, thought it not a prey to be as God." Others again: "Who being in the form of

God, thought it not a prey to be equal to God." And others: "Who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be like God, or to be as God." The last, however, labours under the defect of the common version in this respect; that the first of a long enumeration of things stated to have been thought, and done, by Christ himself in proof of his humility, is what is no proof of humility at all. But they all shew that the passage cannot be used to prove the doctrine of the Trinity.

That the words ισα Θεω may be rendered 'like God,' or 'as God,' may be proved by numerous instances in which the word  $\iota\sigma\alpha$  is used in this sense. I shall select two, out of a great number, from the Septuagint translation of the Book of Job. The first is Job xi. 12: "For vain man would be wise, though man be born, ισα ονω ερημιτη, like a wild ass's colt." The second is Job xl. 15: "Behold now behemoth, which I made with thee; He eateth grass,  $\iota\sigma\alpha$ , as an ox." It has been pretended \* that the idea actually expressed in the former is more than mere resemblance; namely, that man is born on an equality with a wild ass's colt. contend, that the idea either expressed or understood does not amount even to as much as mere resemblance, but only to resemblance in one particular point, and has nothing to do with equality, nor even with the exact degree of resemblance. The writer, as is obvious, did not mean to convey to us

<sup>\*</sup> By Mr. Wardlaw.

the notable discovery, that man is born equally high in the scale of being with a wild ass's colt, as the Trinitarians wish us to understand ioa in the passage in question means that our Lord stood in, with regard to the Father; nor, on the other hand, that he was born equally low in the scale of being with a wild ass's colt; neither of which would be true: but solely, that they resembled each other in being both born, or in being born weak, and to a certain extent feeble and helpless; and in that respect this vain creature man, so proud of his reason, of his powers and prerogatives, was originally brought forth like a very mean and despised animal. That resemblance in a single instance, and not equality, was in the writer's view, will be obvious, when it is considered, that in some respects the colt when born is superior to the man; namely, in having the complete use of his limbs, and being able to walk and run immediately; and in others the man is greatly superior to the colt, as bringing into the world those mental powers which require only to be developed and exercised, to enable him to subdue and govern the rest of the animal creation. The latter text which I have produced confirms this; nothing being more clear than that the word  $\iota\sigma\alpha$ , as applied to the behemoth and the ox, does not relate to the quantity of grass eaten by the one and the other, or to their equality in any one instance; but merely to their resemblance in this, that both eat grass. In every other respect, whether the behemoth of Job be the elephant or the hippopotamus, they most widely differ from each other, and there is nothing like equality between them, both these creatures being greatly superior in strength, and differing widely in their appearance and habits from the ox; sometimes perhaps eating, especially the hippopotamus, five times as much grass as an ox; resembling him, however, only in eating grass, whether more or less than he does. I should think that none would relish translating the word  $i\sigma\alpha$  here, as the common version does in Philipp. ii. 6, "Behold, he eateth grass equal with an ox."

The verb hytomai, in this celebrated passage, has also been translated by some in the sense of imaginor, who accordingly render συχ άρπαγμον ήγησατο το ειναι ισα Θεω, "did not imagine, or think of, a robbery, that is, to be equal to God;" meaning, that it would have been a robbery to have done so. And Novatian, one of the Latin fathers, who flourished about the middle of the third century, and was never considered to be behind any of his contemporaries on the subject of the Trinity, seems to have annexed some such meaning to the corresponding Latin words, arbitratus est, by which ήγησατο is rendered into that language; and never could have understood them in the sense of our modern translators, but in a sense the very opposite. His words are "Hie ergo, quamvis esset in forma Dei, non est rapinam arbitratus, æqualem se Deo esse. Quamvis enim se ex Deo Patre Deum esse meminisset, nunquam se Deo Patri, aut compa-

ravit, aut contulit, memor se esse ex suo Patre, et hoc ipsum quod est, habere se quia Pater dedisset." Novat. cap. xxii. p. 84. "He therefore, although he was in the form of God, did not imagine, think of, or determine upon, the prey, rapine, or robbery, to be equal to God. For though he knew that he was God of God the Father, he never compared himself with God the Father, being mindful that he was of the Father, and that he had what the Father gave him." Let any one who is not satisfied with any of the meanings here given to arbitratus est, substitute those of the common version, "thought it not," and try to make this consistent with the words which follow them. The entire scope and design of Novatian is to represent the Son to be inferior to the Father, and consequently he could not possibly have understood the words in question in the same sense as the Trinitarians of the present day do. If any doubt remained as to the opinion of this father, it would be completely removed by referring to his 27th chapter, p. 102; where he says of Christ: "Dum ergo accipit sanctificationem a Patre, minor Patre est." "Since therefore he receives sanctification from the Father, he is less than the Father."

Here we have the remarkable instance of a zealous Trinitarian father at this early period,—when the doctrine of the Trinity had not advanced as far as it has since, and did not comprise the equality of the three persons who were then imagined to have com-

posed it,—quoting this very passage, to prove the inferiority of the Son to the Father, which more modern Trinitarians, after subsequent councils had voted him equal, have brought forward in proof of his equality.

It is by no means necessary to rest the proof of this passage having been understood in ancient times in a sense quite opposite to that in which it is understood by modern Trinitarians upon the authority of Novatian only, others having expressed themselves in such a manner as to shew that they entertained similar ideas of its meaning. Thus Origen in his commentary upon St. John says: "We may presume to affirm, that the goodness of Christ appeared greater, and more divine, and truly after the image of his Father, when he humbled himself unto death even the death of the cross; η ει άπαγμον ήγησατο το ειναι ισα  $\Theta_{\varepsilon\omega}$ , than if he had thought of the robbery of being equal to God, or had thought it a prey to be equal to, or like God, and would not have become a servant for the salvation of the world." Com. in. Joh. edit. Huetii, p. 34. Apply the translation of modern Trinitarians to the words άρπαγμον ήγησατο, and the reasoning of Origen will be entirely destroyed; for then it will stand, "The goodness of Christ appeared greater and more divine, and truly after the image of his Father, when he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross, than if he had thought it a robbery to be equal to God, and would not have become a servant." It is obvious,

that his thinking it a robbery, that is criminal, to be equal to God, though possessed of divine and god-like powers, which denoted humility of mind, would have warranted the conclusion, that he would with like humility have readily become a servant for the salvation of mankind; instead of refusing to do it, as might have been expected, had he been high-minded, and thought of the robbery of being equal to God, or thought it a prey obtained by his own power, and to be retained and used for his own benefit and aggrandisement. But considering Origen to have understood this part of the Epistle to the Philippians in either of the senses I have mentioned, the whole of the passage just quoted from him will be consistent, and the reasoning just.

Even Eusebius, in his time, appears to have understood the words in a sense the very reverse of that of the present Trinitarians; as he cites them to prove that our Lord was not δ Θεος, God with the article: For he says: "Πως αυτος ην εν μορΦη Θεου, δυναμει αυτος ων δ Θεος; Πως δε ουχ άρπαγμον ηγησατο το ειναι ισα Θεω, αυτος ων δ Θεος;" Contr. Marcell. lib. i. c. 18. "How was he in the form of God, or a God, if he was himself in power δ Θεος (that is God with the article, the God, or the Supreme God)? How did he not think of the robbery, to be equal to God, or a God, or think it a prey to be equal to or like, or as God, or a God, if he was himself δ Θεος (that is, God with the article, the God, or the Supreme God)?" If

you prefer a different translation, it must nevertheless be one that has a contrary meaning to that of the common version. The fact still remains, that he used the words for the opposite purpose, and therefore must have understood them in an opposite sense, to that which the common translation is designed to convey.

Hilary also understood the words in a sense nearly similar; namely, in that of non sibi rapiens, his words being "Quia suscipienda erat forma servi, et obediens esset futurus ad mortem, non sibi rapiens, esse se æqualem Deo, ad susceptionem se formæ servilis per obedientiam exinanivit." Hil. de Trin. lib. viii. "Because the form of a servant was to be taken, and he was to be obedient unto death, not snatching to himself that he was equal to God, in order to take upon him the servile form, he through obedience emptied himself."

It has been well observed, that in times long subsequent to these Fathers, the Latin phrase rapinam arbitratus est still retained the true sense of the Greek άρπαγμον ήγησατο, as may be seen in a form of excommunication at a council held in the city of Rome in the year 1076: "Beate Petre,—ego (Papa Gregorius VII.) non rapinam arbitratus sum, ad sedem tuam ascendere, potiusque volui vitam meam in peregrinatione finire, &c." Labbe, tom. x. p. 279. Harduin, tom. vi. p. 1481, citat. a Fabritio Biblioth. Gr. tom. xi. p. 593.

The same thing appears in Phœbadius, who says: "Sermo cum in forma Dei esset, non se Deo Patri adæquavit, sed formam servi accipiens, &c." "The Word, when he was in the form of God, did not equal himself with God the Father, but taking upon him the form of a servant, &c." Phœbadius cont. Arianos, in Biblioth. PP. tom. iv. p. 305.

This passage, my dear Sir, I have no doubt you produced upon the faith of the common version, without considering it necessary, as your attention perhaps had not been particularly directed to it, to look any further. But as upon a careful investigation it appears that the original will admit of so many different interpretations, several of them entirely different from, and some diametrically opposite to, that assigned to it in this version, I appeal to your own candour, whether, if it rested here, we should not be bound to pronounce the passage to be totally unfit to be quoted as an authority on either side of the question, even if the point in dispute had been of much less consequence?

How much less, then, can we be expected to receive it as proof of a doctrine of such high importance as that of the Trinity? a doctrine which, as I have observed more than once, its own advocates admit, if not adored as a mystery, must be exploded as an absurdity; when the interpretation that must be given to it, to qualify it for that office, disturbs the sense, is repugnant to the general scope and design of the writer, and harmonizes with none of our Lord's decla-

rations of himself? when it not only does not require that interpretation; but admits of others, which are perfectly rational, perfectly agreeable to the writer's general design and purport, and completely in unison with our Lord's own declarations and representations of himself? What other writings, let me ask, ever received such treatment at the hands of their translators and commentators, as the Christian Scriptures have experienced from their Trinitarian friends? Who ever, in any other case, adopted a translation which involved an absurdity, or at the least great difficulty and improbability, when the original would admit of a rational and satisfactory interpretation? What should we say of any translator or commentator who should venture to treat Homer or Herodotus, Cæsar or Virgil, or any other writer of antiquity, in a similar manner? it wil betterfold by the said to the

I consider it incumbent upon me, however, to remark, that this has by no means been the case with Trinitarian critics and commentators indiscriminately, who have favoured us with their opinions upon this passage; many of them having understood the words εχ άρπαγμον ήγησατο το ειναι ισα Θεω, in the same, or a similar sense, as other critics and commentators ancient and modern have done,—"did not esteem it a prey to be like God:" of whom it will suffice at present to mention Erasmus, Grotius, Archbishop Tillotson, Archbishop Newcome, Bishop Bull, and Dr. Wall.

Before I close this article, permit me, my good

friend, to address two more questions to you. Where does this passage from St. Paul's Epistle to the Philippians speak of our Lord's having had original glory? and where does it say any thing of his having—to use your own words—received a new and peculiar glory, in the new nature he had assumed? The apostle does not say a syllable about any original glory of our Lord, nor is the word nature to be found in the whole passage, nor any thing like it. Consequently those who are in search of the doctrine of the two natures will be disappointed if they look for it here.

You state, "that it is in consequence of our Lord's having voluntarily acted as a faithful servant of his Father, that he is now exalted to a delegated kingdom of great glory, which is to be given up to the Father at the last day." But you tell me, "that when I urge that this is to be followed by the Son himself being subject to the Father (1 Cor. xv. 24. 28), you reply, Would not this argue, that previously to that day he was not subject, and of course that he is not now?" "This, however," you add, "would not suit my hypothesis, nor indeed yours; for that you readily grant, that you conceive the Son is now acting as the faithful delegate of the Father, who holds in the scheme of redemption the office of guardian of the rights of government in the universe: that Christ is then to give up the kingdom, by giving in an account of his administration, shewing that the Son had been faithfully subject to the Father, and that this mode of delegated

government being no longer requisite, the government of God, as God, whether as Father, Son, or Holy Spirit, will then be all in all."

It seems almost superfluous for me to combat a mere implication, which if it were a legitimate one would prove a two-edged sword, striking, as you allow, at the Trinitarian, as well as the Unitarian, hypothesis. I shall observe, however, that an implication is merely an inference in the absence of a positive declaration or allegation; that it cannot be fairly made from a few words, contrary to the manifest sense of the whole passage construed together; and that it may always be rebutted by other evidence from the same or other sources. The apostle has taken abundant care that it shall not arise in the present instance; having not only excepted the Father, out of the things which the Son shall put under him; but declared also the Father's supremacy, by informing us, that though the Son is represented as putting all things under his feet, it is done not by his own power, but by the power of the Father, who in fact puts all things under him; for he says: "And when all things shall be subjected to him, then shall the Son also be subject to him, who subjected all things to him, that God (6 Osos) may be all in all." 1 Cor. xv. 27, 28. The legitimate inference therefore, which corresponds too with the whole passage, seems to me to arise easily and naturally; namely, that he is at present acting in his kingdom, as a delegated king, under the supreme sovereignty of the Fa-

ther, who is subduing all things under him by his (the Father's) almighty power, displayed in him, and by him, as far as is necessary to effect this great design. But when all the glorious and gracious purposes for which his kingdom was established shall have been accomplished, he shall deliver it up to the Father; and from that time, instead of a king, be merely a subject to the Father, in that very kingdom in which he had previously exercised regal power under him. If any thing further was required to rebut the inference in question, we should be amply furnished with it by St. Matthew, chap. xx. ver. 20-23, where the mother of two of his disciples is represented as approaching him, and desiring him to grant that her two sons might sit, the one on his right hand, and the other on his left, in his kingdom; and our Lord informs her, "that to sit on his right hand, and on his left, is not his to give; but that it should be given to those for whom it was prepared of his FATHER." Is it possible, in the face of such a declaration as this, to draw an inference, that a son to whom a kingdom is appointed by his Father, who is constantly interposing and subduing all his son's enemies, reserving to himself, however, even the appointment of his principal ministers and officers, of those who are to sit on his right hand and on his left, -is nevertheless, even whilst exercising this subordinate and delegated power, not subject to his Father, but equal to him in every respect? Never was any implication more decidedly and completely rebutted than

that in question, and by the highest of all authorities—our Lord's own words.

Your description of the Father, as "holding, in the scheme of redemption, the office of guardian of the rights of government in the universe," appears to me to be at least unscriptural, if not perfectly novel; as I know not where such an appellation is bestowed upon him, or where any such office is mentioned in the sacred writings. But without stopping to notice this more particularly, I proceed to the still more remarkable assertion, "that Christ is to give up the kingdom, by giving in, an account of his administration." It is rather extraordinary that it should not have occurred to you, that a person having delegated authority giving an account of his administration is one thing, and his giving up his authority another; that, so far from its being the same thing, it might on the contrary well happen, that, on his account proving satisfactory, his authority might be confirmed and continued. The apostle, however, speaks expressly of his delivering up the kingdom; but does not say a syllable of his delivering in an account of his administration, much less that they were one and the same thing: neither does he say, nor is any thing of the kind to be met with in any of the sacred writings, "that this mode of delegated government being no longer requisite, the government of God, as God, whether of Father, Son, or Holy Spirit, shall be all in all." This-meaning · I presume, for it is difficult to annex any other meaning

to it, that they shall then all be joint and equal partakers in the government-may be the language of Trinitarians; but it is not the language of the evangelists or apostles. What says the great apostle to the gentiles in this very passage? "that the end cometh, when Christ shall have delivered up, not an account, but the kingdom itself, to God (TW OEW, God with the article) even the Father." And what does he say shall be done by the Son, when all this shall have taken place? That he shall reign equally with him and the Holy Ghost? or that he shall reign at all? No: but that he shall be SUBJECT, subject to him that put all things under him; that God-(à Osos, God with the article,) the same & Osoc, God with the article, just before described to be the Father, for he mentions no other,-may be all in all; meaning, according to your own very correct sense of the phrase in this respect, that his government will be all in all.

There is not a word in this whole passage calculated to convey the least idea, that, after Christ shall have delivered up the kingdom to the Father, any one shall exercise the powers and authorities of it but the Father only. Of the Son nothing is said, but that he shall be subject. Of the Holy Ghost, nothing at all. The old subterfuge of the supposed two natures is quite out of the question; the person who is to be subject, instead of reigning, being described to be the Son, whatever he consisted of. If, as the Trinitarians suppose, he consists of a divine and human nature inse-

parably united, and constituting one person called the Son; that person after his exaltation, and when in the full possession of all his glories, is to be subject to his EQUAL! It is sufficient, however, to observe, that the apostle himself makes use of no expression which can be so twisted, and perverted, as to give countenance to any such notion. He does not say that the Son shall deliver up the kingdom to any being composed of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; but expressly, and unequivocally, declares, that he shall deliver it up to God, even the Father, which wholly excludes both the Son himself and any supposed person called the Holy Spirit. He does say that the Son, after this, shall be subject. He does not say that the Son after this shall reign; nor do any of his words import that he ever contemplated the subsequent dominion of any one but the Father only. The fancy therefore, that he had in view the subsequent government of the Son, of whom he says nothing, but that he was to be subject; or of a supposed person, distinct from the Father and the Son, whom he does not so much as mention or allude to,-has really nothing to support it; but is like one of the unsubstantial visions of the night, which the first returning ray of the bright orb of day banishes for ever.

You have mentioned three instances of persons not prepossessed, as you conceive, by Trinitarian notions, but two of them on the contrary entertaining Unitarian opinions, and one being a Deist, who had em-

braced the Trinitarian doctrine; the latter of whom, you say, "meeting with a book on the evidences of Christianity, which altered his views, sat down to read the Greek Testament, to learn what were its doctrines, and set down every text which appeared to support the divinity of Christ, and every one which seemed to oppose it; and on comparing them, he adopted the double view of Christ, as both God and man, which he never afterwards doubted." I have never denied that there have been a few instances, and very few indeed they have been, of Unitarians having adopted different views of Christianity, and having become Trinitarians; which is by no means surprising, when we consider the nature of the human mind, and in what manner it is frequently influenced in forming its judgements. But let me entreat you to put into the opposite scale the multitudes who have deserted the Trinitarian cause, and joined the Unitarians, and amongst them so many men of distinguished learning and talents.

You have not informed me, however, that either of the persons you state to have exchanged Unitarian for Trinitarian sentiments was not educated in Trinitarian opinions; and we well know the effect of early habits and associations, when the mind begins once more to waver and fluctuate. The Deist you allude to might have been educated a Trinitarian; and, if he were not, was probably always, or generally, accustomed to hear of Christianity as connected with the

doctrine of the Trinity, and adopted in such connection by the great body of Christians. He might probably, too, have made use of a Greek Testament containing more than one spurious text, introduced by Trinitarians in support of their system; particularly the celebrated one, I John v. 7, "For there are three that bear record in Heaven; the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost; and these three are one:" which we know had so much influence upon the mind of Dr. Doddridge, and no doubt upon thousands of others, but which no critic or scholar will now deny to be a palpable forgery.

The double view of Christ, both as God and Man, which you mention with approbation as having been adopted by the Deist, and which has been so highly extolled by Trinitarian writers in general, as calculated to solve all difficulties relative to the person of Christ,—appears to me, except in that view of the former term which was taken of it by our Lord himself, when he intimated that it might have been applied to him in its inferior sense, as well as to the prophets who preceded him, not only to have no foundation in Scripture, but to create difficulties, instead of solving them. The Trinitarians who invented it, cannot very well do without it; but, like other ill-constructed instruments, it appears to me,to use a homely expression,—to make more holes than it mends. I shall specify a few instances of this. When our Lord (Matth. xxiv. 36), speaking

to his disciples of the day of judgment, says, "But of that day and hour knoweth no one, no, not the angels of heaven; but my Father ONLY;" we understand our Lord perfectly, and believe him readily, that this day is a secret to men and angels, even to the Son himself, and is known only to the Father. Every thing is perfectly plain and easy, till the Trinitarian comes with his double view, and says, How can that be? The Son is perfect God as well as man, and being omniscient, must know every thing: he must therefore, he says, know it in some way or other; and makes a clumsy and abortive attempt to explain it by his two natures, which does not explain it, being in direct opposition to the concluding words of the passage, but leaves it as great a mystery as the Trinity itself.

So, John xvii. 1—3, our Lord, praying to the Father for the disciples, whom he (the Father) had given him, makes use of these words: "Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee: As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him. And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent." Here too, every thing is clear and perspicuous. Our Lord distinguishes between his Father who had sent him, and himself who had been sent, and expressly declares his Father to be the only true God,—a declaration so plain, so unambiguous,

that it seems impossible to raise any doubt or difficulty upon it, till this infallible optical invention of the double view is applied to it; when instantly all becomes darkness and confusion, from which even Trinitarian ingenuity cannot extricate us.

In like manner, when our Lord (John xiv. 28) expressly says, "My Father is greater than I," we perceive an explicit and intelligible avowal of his own inferiority to the Father, corresponding with many other expressions he has elsewhere made use of to the same effect; and immediately give him credit for the truth of the assertion, entertaining no suspicion of any mental reservation or double dealing, or that the words are not to be understood in their ordinary and natural sense. But when the double view comes, it mars every thing, and creates a difficulty where before there had been none at all.

Thus likewise in the passage lately cited, Matth. xx. 20—23, where our Lord informs the mother of James and John, "that to sit on his right hand and on his left, in his kingdom, was not his to give; but that it should be given to them for whom it was prepared of his Father;" we understand him, in the obvious and usual sense of the words, not to have been invested with authority to appoint to these most distinguished places in the kingdom he was about to receive; but that they should be given to those for whom it was prepared of the Father: and find no obscurity in the passage till we begin to see double; when suddenly every

thing becomes distorted and perplexed, and we know not what to make of it. Like the good woman, who on being asked how she liked the exposition of a text in scripture which she had just heard, replied with great simplicity, that when she read it in her bible she understood it very well, but after the doctor had been expounding it for an hour, she knew nothing at all about it.

Having observed in my last Letter, that though you stated that some of the Fathers shewed from the use of the word in our Lord's declaration, John x. 30. "I and my Father are one ( )," that the doctrine of the Trinity was not a contradiction, inasmuch as he does not say that two persons are sig (one), but sy, that is To Selov (one divine being), as they are pleased, without a tittle of evidence, to explain it; I must take the liberty of affirming, that to say that two persons are one being was a flat contradiction; for that I supposed it would not be denied that a person was a being, that consequently two persons must be two beings; and that to say that two persons were but one being, was a palpable absurdity. You now reply in these words: "As to the flat contradiction with which you charge the doctrine of a Trinity of persons in one God, it is always to be remembered that the Trinitarians do not take the word person there, in the same sense as in common speech. We contend that it is to be taken in some middle sense; between the philosophical person, as a distinct complete being, and the political, as George king of Hanover is a distinct person from George king of England. If you say, we know of no such person; I answer, every thing in the Deity is sui generis, nor can we expect that his personal mode of subsisting should be like ours. If he himself, who best knows his own nature, speaks of himself as including three personal distinctions, it is to me a sufficient reason for believing it. Contradictions I do not, cannot believe; though Unitarians—as you would prefer being called, though I cannot concede to you the appellation—suppose we do: yet I can believe many things to be true, of which I have only a very imperfect knowledge. Indeed every thing concerning the Deity I believe in this way, for I can have complete knowledge and adequate ideas of nothing divine,"

This, my dear Sir, is a most important step, and brings us much nearer to each other, which I am extremely happy to find; for, admitting the word person, as applied to the Trinity, not to mean a person, as is understood by the word in common parlance, and that the Supreme Being speaks of himself as including three personal distinctions, which you seem to consider as constituting the Trinity; we arrive at the system of the Nominalists, who maintain that the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, are three distinctions in the one self-existing Deity, analogous to the faculties of understanding, will, and power, in men, to which three distinctions, personal terms may be applied. Amongst

the ancients, Saint Augustine appears to have been an advocate for this hypothesis; and Calvin, Hooker, Burnett, Wallis, South, and Baxter, amongst the moderns. If what have been commonly denominated persons in the Godhead, are not persons in the usual sense of the word; but only three personal distinctions, or some things, between philosophical persons, as distinct and complete beings, and political persons, and are no otherwise distinct persons than George king of England is a distinct person from George king of Hanover, whom we know very well to be one person, and one being, sustaining two different characters, as king of two different kingdoms,—there is no more a Trinity of persons in the Godhead, than there is a duality of persons in our venerable and afflicted monarch. There may be three, or three hundred distinctions in the same person; but what there is to make a distinction a person, or how the one is to be transformed into the other, we are not yet informed, nor can we conceive. A personal distinction is no more a person, than a personal ornament, as a ring, or a necklace, or a bracelet. If any one can understand what is meant by personal distinctions, other than personal powers, characters, attributes, or relations, I must confess it is more than I can; and if they mean powers, characters, relations, or attributes, as I suppose is intended by selecting the great personage who is king of England and of Hanover for a proof, or instance, I cannot see in what respect your system differs materially from that of Dr. Wallis, formerly Savillian Professor of Mathematics at Oxford, one of the Nominalists above mentioned, who, in his Considerations on the Trinity, p. 7, censures it as "a silly mistake, that a divine person is as much as to say a Divinity or a God; when indeed a divine person is only a mode, or respect, or relation of God to his creatures. He bears to his creatures these three relations, modes, or respects,—that he is their creator, their redeemer, their sanctifier. This is what we mean, and all that we mean, when we say God is three persons. He hath those three relations to his creatures, and is thereby no more three Gods, than he was three Gods to the Jews, because he calls himself the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob."

This, as it has been justly called, (Belsham's Calm Inquiry, p. 337) truly Unitarian doctrine, appears to have received the marked approbation of the University of Oxford; while Dr. Sherlock's hypothesis, that the three persons of the Trinity were three distinct infinite minds, underwent a public censure. And with this modal hypothesis Mr. Lindsey satisfied himself to remain in the church, and to use the liturgy, some years after he became an Unitarian.

The objections to this hypothesis cannot with equal brevity, if at all, be better stated than in the words of Mr. Belsham (Calm Inquiry, p. 338); namely:

"1st. That if by distinctions, or persons, attributes only are meant, the word person is used in a sense

very different from that which custom has established, and in a manner which must necessarily deceive those who are not upon their guard against this unprecedented abuse of language.

"2dly. That this hypothesis in fact annihilates the proper personality, and thereby the real existence, of the Son and Spirit: and though the advocates of this hypothesis hold the language of proper Trinitarians, yet, in ideas, they coincide altogether with the Sabellians, or even with the proper Unitarians.

"3dly. That this hypothesis converts a great part of the language of the New Testament into unintelligible jargon. Thus when it is said that the Father sent his Son to be the Saviour of the world, it is the same as saying, that one attribute, or distinction of the Deity, sent another attribute, or distinction of the Deity, to be the Saviour of the world. And when the Son prayed to the Father, one attribute or distinction of the divine nature prayed to another attribute of distinction of the divine nature.

"4thly. That if it should be maintained, that the three persons in the Godhead are three distinctions, or, as some have expressed themselves, three somewhats, that are not to be understood, or explained, this is substituting words, instead of ideas, and is in fact little better than giving up the question."

Mr. Yates (Vindication of Unitarianism, p. 125) very properly inquires of those who hold this doctrine:

"Why they call the three relations of God, as our

creator, reedeemer, and sanctifier, three *persons*, although the term is not so used in Scripture, and none could be more unappropriate?

"Why they restrict themselves to the number three, although God is not only the creator, the redeemer, and the sanctifier of mankind; but bears towards them various other relations; being, for example, their preserver, their governor, and their judge?

"Why they assert, that these three relations existed from all eternity: for how could God bear the relation of a creator, before he had created any thing; or the relation of a redeemer, before he had redeemed mankind through Christ; or the relation of a sanctifier, before there were any rational beings to sanctify?

"What sense there is, in the expression, that the relation of Redeemer was begotten from the relation of Creator, and that the relation of Sanctifier proceeds from the relation of Creator and Redeemer?

"Lastly, why they worship three modes, or relations of God, instead of worshiping God himself?"

In addition to which, I shall beg leave to address the following questions to yourself: Where, if your system does not exactly coincide with that of the Nominalists, do you find, in the whole compass of Scripture, any declaration that there are three persons in the Godhead, or that the word *person* is applied to any thing subsisting in the divine nature in some middle sense, between the philosophical person, as a distinct complete being, and the political person? This ap-

pears to me to be all poetry, mere human invention, devised to support other inventions. I must certainly declare, that I know of no such person, and should be glad if you would inform me where any such person is described in the Scriptures. I have no objection to admit that every thing in the Deity is sui generis; but deny that it can be proved from the Scriptures, that there is any thing in the divine nature HUJUS generis, any thing like the sort of person taken in a middle sense, which you have described. We cannot, it is true, expect that his personal mode of subsisting should be like ours; but we have an undoubted right to expect, that it should be shewn to have been revealed to be like that which you have described, before we believe it to be so. I perfectly concur with you in opinion, that if he himself, who best knows his own nature, speaks of himself as including three personal distinctions, it is a sufficient reason for believing it;—but where does he make this extraordinary declaration? I by no means wish to impute the belief of contradictions, knowing them to be such, to any one, far less to yourself; and the Trinity you seem to profess, as you have now explained it, being a Trinity of personal distinctions or relations, if I am not mistaken in my ideas of it, seems less open to objections of this kind, than the Trinity as commonly received by Trinitarians, consisting of three distinct persons or minds, and supposed by them to constitute but one God; for as God is allowed by all, not only

to be a being, but to be the first and greatest of all beings, and as persons must, as long as there is any meaning in language, be considered, as they always have been, to be beings,-to say that two persons are one being, is, as I remarked in my former Letter, not only a flat contradiction, but a palpable absurdity: but to say that two personal distinctions may subsist in one being, though it may not be intelligible till we know what is meant by such distinctions, cannot be decidedly pronounced to be a contradiction. It is, however, equally unscriptural: -and why should such subtle, abstruse, and perplexed doctrines be forced upon us, and the belief of them be represented as essential to our salvation, when the doctrines themselves are no where stated in the sacred writings, much less is our salvation declared to be in any manner connected with the belief of them?

I feel some surprise, I must confess, that you hesitate to concede the name of Unitarians to us, who believe in the absolute unity of the Supreme Being, considered as one person and as one being, unmixed with any opinion that can raise, even in words, the idea of a plurality, either of Gods, or persons constituting God, and believe him alone to be God, and none else. If we are not Unitarians, no other body of Christians can be. The only doubt I have ever before heard started, has been, whether we were entitled to the appellation, to the exclusion of our Trinitarian brethren; which, after all, may possibly be what you mean. If Trini-

tarians, conceiving themselves to maintain the Divine Unity in one view of it, choose to adopt the term, I should certainly never think of making any objection to it; but should consider them as one class of Unitarians, having one view (though in my judgement an erroneous view) of the subject, and ourselves as another class of Unitarians, having a different, and in my humble opinion a more correct view of it.

We undoubtedly prefer to be called Unitarians rather than Socinians, because the former name, as far as it goes, does denote our opinions; whilst the latter, as we differ materially from the Socinians, can only misrepresent us, and deceive others. We decline it, not as a name of reproach, though our opponents have sometimes endeavoured to fasten it upon us for this unworthy purpose; for we consider the two noble Italians, Lælius and Faustus Socinus, from whom it is derived, to have been men who would have done honour to any sect; but we take not from them such of the doctrines as we happen to hold in common with them, but from the Scriptures, as the majority of Christians, who were Unitarians also during the three first centuries, did before us; and we do not regard the two distinguished characters just mentioned as having first revived the Unitarian doctrines in modern times; for when Faustus Socinus went into Poland, he found Unitarians there before him; and there is reason to think that Unitarianism was never completely extinguished, either in Asia, or in the South

of France and Italy, even in the darkest and most barbarous ages.

I can believe with yourself many things to be true, of which I have only a very imperfect knowledge; but I expect, notwithstanding, to have very satisfactory evidence of their truth, before I accede to the belief of it. The less I know of the nature of a thing, the more likely I am to be mistaken about it; and consequently the more diligently I am bound to investigate it, before I give my assent to its being this, or that. For the same reason, because I can have complete knowledge and adequate ideas of nothing divine, I am the more suspicious of being deceived when any thing in particular is propounded to me as being divine, or a divine attribute, or as being part of the Divine Nature; and I require as strict, if not stricter proof of it, before I can believe it to be true, than of most other things, particularly if it appears, when first stated, to be extraordinary, improbable, or absurd.

Your next statement is, "that you find the Redeemer commands his apostles to baptize in the name, not names, of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; that all admit the Father and Son to be persons; and that it is most strange if the other is not; for such association of two persons with a mere quality, or an influence from one of the two, could only be expected to mislead; that the apostles implored benediction from three; that each of the three is commended to our reverence and obedience."

In reply to this, I shall first inquire, whether you are quite certain, that the words in the 19th verse of the 28th chapter of St. Matthew, "baptizing them into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit," are genuine. I admit that if they have been interpolated, the interpolation must have taken place previous to the existence of any of our present manuscripts. But as the earliest of these does not go back further than the fourth century, and some interpolations, and numerous various readings, have taken place since, we are by no means at liberty to declare positively, that during the three first centuries there were none at all, and in particular that this passage was not one, especially if we have strong evidence, intrinsic or extrinsic, to favour the opinion that it was. Now in the first place, upon a strict examination of the context it will be found, that if the words in question be omitted, it will not disturb the context at all, which will read as easily and smoothly, if not more so, than when they are present: for the words (ver. 19 and 20) "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you," where the words 'teaching' and 'teaching' coming so near to each other would have an unpleasant effect, on leaving out the intermediate words, being the words in question, are not so in the Greek; but the expression is varied, as if to prevent the ill effect which would have arisen from the almost immediate repetition of the same word. In that lan-

guage it is Πορευθεντες ουν μαθητευσατε παντα τα εθνη... διδασκοντες αυτους τηρειν παντα όσα ενετειλαμην ύμιν και ιδου, εγω μεθ' ύμων ειμι πασας τας ήμερας, έως της συντελειας του αιωνος. Go forth, (or having gone forth,) therefore, instruct (or make disciples of) all nations..... teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always to the end of the age." To my ears the passage, thus divested of the words in question, runs more smoothly than it does with them. There is no want of a conjunction between 'instruct' and 'teaching', the one being in the imperative mood and the other in the participle present, as there seems to be between 'baptizing' and 'teaching', both of which are participles present. Laying no stress, however, upon this, such omissions not being unusual, and my design in noticing the construction of the passage being only to shew that it will read at least as well, without the words alluded to as with them, -I proceed to the extrinsic evidence against them, which appears to me to be very strong. In the first place, if our Lord had, at the time in question, (after his resurrection and just before his ascension,) commanded his apostles to baptize all nations into the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit; such a command, being one of the last he ever delivered to them, would, having been enjoined upon them at such a time and in so solemn a manner, have made the deepest impression upon their minds; and a regular and constant compliance with it

would have been considered by them-as it is by the Trinitarians at present—to have been of the greatest importance. It must necessarily have been regarded as a most solemn law, binding them to the strictest performance, and requiring to be carefully enjoined upon every Christian, by all who called themselves teachers of Christianity. But what is the fact? Three out of the four historians who have written the life of our Lord,—one of whom professes to give an account of all that he did and taught, -take no notice of it at all, but pass it over in absolute silence. In addition to their histories, we have numerous Epistles explaining and enforcing the principles and practice of Christianity, written by five of our Lord's own apostles, not one of whom mentions, or even alludes to, this commandment or this form of baptism; as if they had never heard either of the one or the other. But what is still more extraordinary, and wholly unaccountable, (except upon the supposition that these words are a subsequent interpolation,) these writers, and particularly Saint Luke, who has given us a narrative of the transactions of the apostles for a period of thirty years after our Lord's ascension, -often treat even of Christian baptism, not only without mentioning or alluding to this form; but actually describing the form made use of by themselves, and by those whom they appointed to baptize, which never, in any one instance, appears to have been the form prescribed by this supposed commandment; but on the contrary,

instead of being a baptism into the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, appears to have been a baptism into the name of our Lord only! How is this to be accounted for? Is it not much easier to believe that these words were interpolated at some subsequent period, after the death not only of St. Matthew, but of all the rest of the apostles, than to adopt the absolutely incredible opinion, that our Lord's own disciples and companions should have wholly disregarded one of his last, and most authoritative and weighty injunctions? that seven of the New Testament writers out of eight, -six of whom were his apostles, knowing it well,—should have utterly neglected to make the least mention of it, as if it had been a thing of no consequence whatever; and should, in all the instances of baptism, which they have recorded as having been concerned in or acquainted with, have entirely disobeyed it themselves, or have related its disobedience by others, without a single remark in disapprobation of their conduct?

Such are the circumstances attending this famous text. Let every one determine for himself what degree of credit he can believe to be due to it. Who will venture to affirm, after he has maturely considered the whole, that it is *unquestionably* authentic? And unless it is, how could it be regarded as an authority to prove any doctrine; and more especially so important and extraordinary a doctrine as that of the Trinity? supposing it capable of proving it, if it were in

dubitably genuine, which will be another question for our future consideration.

The following texts will evince, that if this supposed commandment was ever given, it was not only not attended to, but was disregarded and disobeyed from the very first. Acts ii. 38: "Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gifts of the Holy Spirit." This exhortation of the apostle, it will beremembered, was given by him in the first Christian sermon that was ever preached after our Lord's resurrection, a very short time only after the supposed command to baptize in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit is pretended to have been so solemnly promulgated, and when it must have remained so strongly impressed upon the memories of all those to whom it was addressed. The Holy Spirit is mentioned too, so that the apostle's attention was called to it at the very time; yet he mentions it as a gift, something to be given, some property or power; and never once as a person, into whose name his hearers were to be baptized. Can any one make up his mind to believe, without any doubt or hesitation, that this chief of the apostles, or any one else who had ever heard of this supposed commandment, would not have said upon the occasion in question, "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit," according to the very form

so recently prescribed by his beloved and then highly exalted Master?

In the 10th chapter of the Acts, ver. 48, it is saidafter the same apostle had asked whether any one could forbid water, that Cornelius the Centurion and his friends should not be baptized, who had received the Holy Spirit as well as himself and his companions -"And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord." In the 19th chapter, ver. 5, 6, we have the following words respecting certain disciples at Ephesus who had been previously baptized into the baptism of John: "When they heard this, they were baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus. And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Spirit came on them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied." Here also the Holy Spirit was not forgotten; notwithstanding which, the baptismal ceremony, as performed under the direction of the great apostle to the Gentiles, was not in the form supposed to have been expressly enjoined by our Lord himself, but in the name of the Lord Jesus only. This terrible blunder, therefore, (or unaccountable omission, as it would be considered at present,) was not confined to a single instance, or to a few individuals only; but, if the passage in question be true, a defective and erroneous form of baptism, entirely different from that commanded by our Lord, was practised by different apostles, at different times and upon a variety of different converts: nor does it appear that any other was

in those days ever practised upon any one. What rational explanation can be given of all this? Were not the apostles men like ourselves? Had they no memories, or no inclination, as we profess to have, to obey the particular injunctions of their revered Master; and more especially one of the last he ever delivered to them?

In the 8th chapter of the same book, ver. 16, it is said of the Samaritans, who were converted by Philip the Evangelist, after Peter and John had prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit: "for as yet it was fallen upon none of them, only they were baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus." Hence we find that the whole body of converts in Samaria who had been converted by Philip, were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus only. Did Philip the Evangelist also know nothing of the pretended commandment of our Lord, to baptize in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit? or did he likewise know it, and wilfully disobey it? Which of the alternatives shall we adopt? If he knew nothing of it, and the apostles did,—how happened it, that they who ordained him let him go forth to preach and to baptize, and yet were so grossly negligent, as not to acquaint him with the proper form of baptism? Who can believe this of our Lord's own apostles? Philip himself we may presume was baptized on his conversion: and is it to be imagined that he was baptized in any other manner than that which he himself after-

wards practised? The baptism of the three thousand who were converted to Christianity by the first preaching of the apostles (Acts ii. 41), and the form of baptism practised upon them, must have been a matter of general notoriety to all the Christians: and is it not to be presumed that they too were all of them baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus only? If they were not, Philip must have known it, and, no doubt, would have followed the numerous examples which had been thus set him by his superiors in the Christian ministry. If they were baptized in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, and Philip—being acquainted with it, as he must have been, and with the solemn commandment of our Lord to baptize in this form-had, in daring violation of this commandment, and of the practice of the apostles founded upon it, thought fit to baptize his Christian converts at Samaria in the name of the Lord Jesus only; would not the apostles Peter and John, when they found this to have been the case, have immediately expressed their disapprobation, and perhaps have directed them to be rebaptized? As they said nothing, however, against it, but immediately laid their hands upon them (as requiring nothing more) that they might receive the Holy Spirit, they admitted, in the fullest manner, that baptism in the name of the Lord Jesus was the proper form of baptism, and consequently could never have believed, or supposed, that

our Lord had commanded any other form for the celebration of this rite.

The apostle Paul afterwards, (Acts xix. 1-5,) finding certain disciples at Ephesus who had been baptized unto, or into, the baptism of John, did not consider them properly baptized for Christian converts; and they were by his order, or with his knowledge and approbation, baptized again: but-wonderful as it would have been, if any one at that time had known of the supposed command of our Lord to baptize differentlythey were all baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus only. The time did arrive, when this latter form of baptism, sanctioned by the express example, and (as far as we know) the uniform practice, of the apostles, came to be considered invalid and insufficient: but it was not in the days of the apostles, or of their contemporaries who survived them. It cannot fail to be considered as a most striking fact, that in these texts whole bodies of Christians are shewn to have been baptized into the name of Christ only, whilst not a single instance can be produced of any one having ever been baptized by the apostles, or by their assistants or contemporaries, into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

It would have been sufficient for me, to have made it appear that there are objections to this passage which must at least prevent us from pronouncing it to be indubitably and beyond all suspicion genuine; and ought therefore to induce us to hesitate, before we produce it as a proof of a doctrine which requires the highest degree of certainty to establish its truth:—but I think I have done more. You will of course, however, exercise your own judgement and form your own opinion upon the subject: but whatever that opinion may be, I consider it my duty to shew, that even if the passage were correct, and the words unquestionably proceeded from the mouth of our Lord, and were actually recorded by the pen of the evangelist, they would be utterly incapable of proving what you have quoted them for, and would never establish the doctrine of the Trinity.

Taking it for granted then, for the sake of the argument, to have been a real and genuine commandment of our Lord,-to baptize into the name of the Father, and of the Son (who are unquestionably persons), and of the Holy Spirit (whatever it may be, whether a person, property, or influence), -is it said that each of them is God? or that the Son, or the Holy Spirit, is God? No. That all three are one God? No. That all three are equal? No. or, That they all subsist in the same being, or substance? No:-nothing like it. Does then the naming of two or more persons together, or at the same time, or the joining of them in the same form or ceremony, prove that they are one, or that they are equal; or that, if one of them happens to be God, the others must also be God? Does the baptizing (εις) into, or (εις το ονομα)

into the name of, any person (which is the same thing), prove that person to be God? If not, how can the passage prove the doctrine of the Trinity?

Though it properly belongs to you to prove the affirmative, which you have not attempted, I shall have no difficulty in making out the negative from the Scriptures themselves, which are our best guides. The following texts will shew most clearly, that the baptizing into, or into the name of, any person means one and the same thing, and does not prove him to be God. Rom. vi. 3: "Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized (ess) into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?" Gal. iii. 27: "For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ." Now as every one must be satisfied from the four texts quoted above from the Book of Acts,namely, Acts ii. 38, Acts x. 48, Acts viii. 16, and xix. 1-5, and even still more, if he believes the words in question to be genuine,—that all the persons to whom the apostle alluded in Rom. vi. 3, and Gal. iii. 27, must have been baptized into the name of Christ, (and they are spoken of in these two last texts as having been baptized into Christ,) it is evident that being baptized into Christ, and into the name of Christ, mean one and the same thing. If any further proof were requisite that the name of a person is used to denote the person himself, we should find it in Psalm xx. ver. l and 7: "The Lord hear thee in the day of trouble; the name of the God of Jacob defend thee."

"Some trust in chariots and some in horses; but we will remember the name of the Lord our God:" meaning nothing more nor less, than remembering God himself. Thus we say in English, The King's Majesty (meaning the King himself) wills or requires such a thing. Being baptized, therefore, unto, or into, Moses or John, must mean the very same thing as being baptized unto or into the name of Moses or of John: and in 1 Corinthians chap. x. ver. 2, the children of Israel are stated to have been baptized (e15) unto or into Moses, in the cloud, and in the sea. So in the 19th chapter of the Acts, ver. 3, the disciples whom Saint Paul found at Ephesus are stated to have been baptized (e15) unto, or into, the baptism of John. But did any one ever believe from these texts that either Moses or John was God? In 1 Cor. i. 12-15, we have these words, addressed by the apostle Paul to the Corinthians: "Every one of you saith, I am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas; and I of Christ. Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized (E15) unto or into the name of Paul? I thank God that I baptized none of you, but Crispus and Gaius; lest any one should say that I had baptized (e15) unto, or into, my own name.' By the question, "Is Christ divided?" it appears that what the apostle was anxious to correct, was a contentious, narrow-minded, and exclusive party spirit in the early converts at Corinth, which was calculated to produce discord and disunion amongst them, and

made many of them plume themselves upon being followers of some favourite apostle or teacher; instead of their being all members of one body, and all disciples and followers of one Master, namely, of Christ: and even induced some, who professed that they were of Christ, to do it in the same temper of contention and rivalry, in opposition to, and in exclusion of, those who professed to be of Paul, and of Apollos, and of Cephas.

This spirit of party, which the apostle censures as carnal in chap. iii. ver. 3 and 4 of the same Epistle, there might have been more pretence for, if each of these apostles and their coadjutors had baptized in his own name; which the apostle Paul therefore, on his part, wholly disavows; but could never have supposed that those whom he himself had instructed that there was but one God, would, even if he had baptized in his own name, have imagined from this, that he himself was God, or that he could have intended to intimate to them, that, by disavowing it, he declined to accept of divine honours—honours which they no more designed to offer, than he to accept. Of course he himself could never have annexed any such idea to the phrase.

But we obtain some insight into what he considered to be the sense of it in his Epistle to the Romans, ch. vi. ver. 3, where we find him making use of the following words: "Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized (sig) into his death?" What would be said of drawing an

inference from this, that the death of Christ is God, or an object of religious worship? Is it not more rational to conclude, that those who are baptized into Christ, and therefore into his death, are thereby baptized into, or make profession of, their belief in him, and his death, as the ground of their future hopes? or say, as has been well observed by Mr. Yates, "that to be baptized into a person or thing, or into the name of a person or thing, is to avow our faith in that person or thing, and not to make it the object of worship: that we are thus enabled to determine the true sense of the appointed formula, which is, Go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them, as a testimony of their belief, in the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit. The passage," he informs us, "is so explained, not only by all the Unitarian expositors, but also by Dr. Whitby, in his paraphrase: Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name, or into the belief, of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." To them I shall add Hilary, one of the Latin Fathers, who flourished about the middle or towards the latter end of the fourth century, and who not only agrees with them in this; but also, though he has written largely concerning the divinity of the Son, seems not to have had the same persuasion concerning that of the Holy Spirit; but, in the little that he says upon the subject, appears rather to have considered the Spirit as a divine influence. He represents our Saviour as commanding the spostles to baptize in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, as signifying a confession of the Father, of the only begotten, and the gift. "Baptizare jussit in nomine Patris, et Filii, et Spiritus Sancti; id est, in confessione et Authoris, et Unigeniti, et Doni." Lib. iv. p. 22.

The baptizing therefore of men, who had previously been made disciples, into, or into the name of, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, no more proves the two latter to be God, than the baptizing of the Israelites into Moses, or many of the Jews into the baptism of John, proves Moses and John to be God; but leaves it wholly undecided: and does not appear to be calculated to determine whether the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, were equal, or unequal; whether either of the two latter was God, or was not God; or whether the Holy Spirit was a person, or only the miraculous power, influence, or energy, of the Father, displayed by him in the miracles, signs, and wonders, which he wrought by the apostles and their immediate disciples in the first age of Christianity, in attestation of its truth. This they, who had previously been made disciples of and instructed, by the apostles, had in the course of such instruction been fully informed of by them'; and we who follow them at so great a distance of time, must learn it from the Scriptures, our only safe and legitimate instructors in these latter ages.

The next subject for our inquiry will be, whether

the naming of two or more persons together, or at the same time, or the joining of them in the same form or ceremony, proves that they are one, or that they are equal, or that if one of them is God, the others also must be God. That none of these things furnish the least proof of any of these positions, will be manifest from the following texts: Exod. xiv. 31; "And the people feared the Lord, and believed the Lord and his servant Moses." Here we have Jehovah and Moses joined in the same sentence, as the objects of the belief of the Israelites. 1 Sam. xii. 18; "And all the people greatly feared the Lord, and Samuel." In this text the Lord and Samuel are named together, as objects of the fear of the people of Israel. 1 Chron. xxix. 20; " And all the congregation blessed the Lord God of their fathers, and bowed down their heads, and worshipped the Lord and the king." In this place David is joined in the same solemn form or ceremony with Jehovah, and the whole congregation of Israel are represented as bowing down their heads and worshipping both; aye, and what is more, as worshipping both at the same time and in the same manner, as being both objects of joint and solemn worship. Yet all this does not prove, nor was it ever supposed, that King David was God, or equal to God; which obviously shews that the naming two or more persons together, or joining them in the same form or ceremony, proves nothing whatever as to their unity or equality. If any other text was requisite in this respect, a more remarkable one could not present itself than 1 Tim. v. 21. where St. Paul, in a solemn adjuration, or charge, to Timothy, says: "I charge thee before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the elect angels, that thou observe these things." Here the elect angels are joined in the same religious form of adjuration, or charge, with God and the Lord Jesus Christ: and it is so like what Trinitarians have been accustomed to consider as a Trinitarian form, that if the words 'Holy Spirit' had been substituted for 'elect angels,' it would have been considered as furnishing irrefragable evidence of the truth of the doctrine of the Trinity, and of each of the three being God, and being equal to each other. Yet, as the elect angels have not had the good fortune to be declared to be God, or to be equal either to the Father or to the Son, by any general council or synod, no one has been hardy enough to deduce either their equality or their godhead, from their having been thus united in this solemn form. If this then does not prove either the one or the other as to them, what colour can there be for pretending that the same thing, or something exactly or very nearly resembling it, proves Jesus Christ to be God, or to be equal to the Father?

If therefore the supposed command to baptize into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, fails to prove that they are one, or that they are equal, or that if one is God the others must, from their being thus joined in a form of baptism,

-any serious expectation of proving it, from its being to baptize into the name (in the singular) and not names, of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, must really be catching at a shadow: for though our blessed Lord, supposing the command to have been given by him, might, if he had thought fit, have used the word names in the plural number, leaving nothing to be understood, he was equally at liberty to use the word name, as it now stands in the common version, in the singular before the first genitive case, leaving it to be understood before the two others, and giving the same sense as if it had been repeated before each; that is, "in the name of the Father, and the name of the Son, and the name of the Holy Spirit:" as we find Luke ix. 26; "For whosoever shall be ashamed of me, and of my words, of him shall the Son of man be ashamed when he shall come in the glory (in the singular number) of himself, and of the Father, and of the holy angels:" for such is the literal translation; and the word 'glory' being once mentioned before, the words 'of himself' is left to be understood, though not expressed, before the words 'of the Father' and the words 'of the Holy Spirit.'

Your reason for directing my attention to the word 'name' being in the singular number, I suppose, was to induce me to think that our Lord and the apostle considered the three who were spoken of, as one; and therefore put the word name in the singular number,

as if they had some one common name, which applied to them all: but this cannot be the construction; for, if it were so, it must be recollected that this would be the name we should be bound to baptize into. We should consequently be much obliged to our Trinitarian friends, if they would inform us what it is, and who ever baptized into it since the first promulgation of Christianity. The apostles certainly did not so construe any command which they ever heard of. They do not appear to have baptized into any common name which applied to all; but, on the contrary, uniformly baptized into a name that applied to one only, that is to say, into the name of Christ. The only common name that we in these latter times have ever heard of, is that of the Trinity; a name no where to be found in the Scriptures, but which unquestionably would have been found there, had it been then known; a name which the apostles and their companions were wholly ignorant of, and which neither they nor any one else in their times ever made use of, or baptized into.

I am unable to perceive why the naming of the Holy Spirit, considering it to be a power or influence of the Father, would be strange, or calculated to mislead, as you have supposed. If the baptism of Christians be a baptizing of them into the belief, or public profession of their belief, of Christianity; there would have been nothing strange, had it really been commanded, in the apostles baptizing their converts into

the belief of the Father (the Supreme God of the universe), into the belief of his Son Jesus Christ (whom he sent into the world for its salvation), and into the belief of that miraculous power, by which his mission was proved and its purposes promoted, which they themselves were favoured with, and daily exercised for its promulgation and confirmation. These convertshaving previously witnessed the effects of this miraculous power, having probably been converted by the miracles performed by it, and having been well instructed that it was the miraculous power of the Father, poured out upon the apostles and their disciples for those purposes—were not at all likely to be deceived by being baptized into the belief of it, in conjunction with the belief of the Father who had bestowed it, and of the Son through whom it had been bestowed by him. If there be any impropriety in mentioning persons and a power in one sentence as objects of our belief, under a pretence of its being an association of them, -which there is no law against, that I am acquainted with, either of grammar, or of any other description; then, supposing the Holy Spirit to be a person, John the Baptist was guilty of a similar impropriety, when he informed his disciples, (Matth. iii. 2), that Christ should baptize them with the Holy Spirit and with fire.

Upon that supposition, if I were to adopt your mode of arguing, I should say, the Holy Spirit is a person, and it is most strange if the other is not; for such an association of a person with a mere quality or influence can be only calculated to mislead. I should thus prove fire to be a person, as well as the Holy Spirit. It is singular that the Baptist is here speaking of the same subject, namely baptism, and he unites baptism with the Holy Spirit, and with fire, together: which, if your argument is of any weight, might also be used against you in another way; inasmuch as it might be contended, that if fire means a quality, influence, or power, the Holy Spirit must also; and therefore both must be mere qualities, influences, or powers.

You have stated,—I suppose inadvertently,—that the apostles implore benediction from three; by which of course must be intended from three persons. This assertion, if well founded, would lead every one, at first view, to suppose that the apostles prayed to all three for benediction, and therefore would be very likely to mislead: but where I am to look for any instances of the apostles having implored benediction from three, you have not done me the favour to say; and I am obliged to observe, that though I have sought diligently, I have not been able to find any such. The only texts of Scripture which it has been in my power to discover, as being at all likely to have suggested such a remark, are 2 Cor. xiii. 14, and Rev. i. 4. The first is a pious and affectionate wish, expressed by the apostle Paul at the conclusion of his second epistle to the Corinthians, that the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ,

and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit, might be with all his Corinthian disciples. But this proves nothing like it; being neither a prayer to, nor an imploring any thing from, the Holy Spirit; but a kind and friendly wish or desire for the participation of the Holy Spirit by all of them; not determining what is meant by the Spirit, but by the word communion, or participation, raising a pretty strong presumption, that all that was meant was a participation of miraculous powers, and not a participation of a person, which would be an uncouth and unnatural expression, to say the least of it.

It has been said that this wish includes a prayer; but this is a mere gratis dictum, without any proof. The words themselves declare it to be a mere good wish at the conclusion of a letter; just as we conclude our letters to our friends about Christmas, with "many happy returns of the season to you," or "I wish you many happy returns of the season." It may, or it may not, have been accompanied by a prayer; and that prayer, if there was any, may have been to the Father, for their all enjoying a participation of his holy spirit, or inspiration of miraculous power, as we know that many of them did: but as nothing is said about any prayer, we have no right to conclude that the wish in question was accompanied by any.

It is impossible to present a juster view of this passage than is done by Mr. Yates in his Vindication, p. 156: "Instead of giving any support, even in the

way of remote allusion, or inference, to the doctrine of the Trinity, this passage bears directly against it. Three distinct beings are mentioned in the benediction. One of them is called God. Since therefore we know that 'there is none other God but one,' it necessarily follows that the two other beings are not God. If all be equally God, why is the title applied to one of them only?

"'The communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all," implies that the Holy Spirit does not in this instance mean God, or any person. What can possibly be intended by the communion of God? Is God divided? Can we partake of God, or of any person? No: but we may partake of powers, energies, and influences; we may enjoy a communion of spiritual gifts. As in Phil. iii. 10, 'the communion of the sufferings of Christ' means a participation in his sufferings; so here, and in Phil. ii. 1, 'the communion of the spirit' signifies a participation in spiritual gifts and influences. We may enjoy a communion of gifts with persons; but a participation of a person is an idea which cannot enter the mind."

The text Rev. i. 4, contains a similar wish expressed by the writer of that book, whoever he was,—whether John the Apostle, or John the Divine, is not clearly ascertained,—for grace and peace to be unto the seven Asiatic churches, whom he addresses, from nine, instead of three; that is, "from him which is, and which was, and which is to come; and from the seven spirits

which are before his throne; and from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten from the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth." This text, instead of proving the personality of the Holy Spirit, says nothing about it. It contains, like the former, a pious and friendly wish, and nothing more, for grace and peace to the seven churches, from God, and from the seven spirits before his throne, and from Jesus Christ; but omits the Holy Spirit entirely; and is in fact the strongest text that can be produced, to shew the absurdity of concluding, -because three or more persons are mentioned or joined together in the same verse, or upon the same occasion,—that therefore they must be one, or be equal, or because one of them is God, all the rest must be God. I am aware that an unfounded assertion has been made, that the seven spirits is an emblematical expression for the Holy Spirit; but there is no proof of it. On the other hand, our Lord is represented as explaining, (ver. 20 of the same chapter,) that the seven stars mentioned in the preceding part of the chapter are not one, but the angels of the seven churches; and that the seven candlesticks there also mentioned, are the seven churches: and in chap. iii. ver. 1, says that he (Christ) hath the seven spirits of God, and the seven stars. And throughout this part of the book, the prophecies which he delivered are represented to be, what the Spirit, in the singular number, (being always thus distinguished from the seven spirits, and meaning the miraculous spirit of prophecy) says, that is, by him, unto the churches. But if the seven spirits are an emblematical representation of the Holy Spirit, it would appear not to be a person, but the spirit of prophecy; and would not, any more than the text 2 Cor. xiii. 14, furnish the slightest proof either of personality, unity, equality, or godhead.

I shall merely add here, that if the writer of this book, who ascribes glory and praise to the Father and the Son in various places, had considered, and intended to represent, the Spirit to be a person, and to be God equal to, and as much entitled to glory and praise as either of them; it is utterly incredible that he should always have omitted him upon these occasions, and treated him as if neither glory nor praise was due to him. How can this be accounted for upon Trinitarian principles?

How the unity, equality, or godhead, of persons is to be proved by our being commanded to reverence and obey them in different parts of Scripture, is beyond my comprehension. The Jews were commanded to reverence and to obey God, and also to reverence and obey Moses and the Prophets; but this did not prove the unity or equality of the latter with the former. They were also, as we are, required to reverence and obey the commandments of God, and consequently the spirit, power, or influence of God, speaking miraculously by his holy messengers and prophets. But neither did this prove that this spirit, power, or in-

fluence, was a person; or, if it were, that he was equal to God.

I do not consider myself called upon in this place to produce the numerous and strong proofs of the impersonality of the Holy Spirit which the Scriptures supply us with; because you have not, in my judgement, advanced any thing like proof of its being a person at all, much less of its being a person equal to the great God and Father of all. Its impersonality has, however, been successfully shewn by others, and much more ably than I could do it. I shall therefore say no more upon the subject, than that if it were a person, it could not be omniscient, because no one but the Father knows the day of judgement. It could not be omnipotent, because no one but the Father hath power to appoint to places on the right hand and left hand of Christ in his future kingdom. It could not be a proper object of religious worship, because neither our Lord nor his apostles ever prayed to it, or ever required any one else to pray to it: but, on the contrary, our Lord has directed us, when we pray, to pray to the Father, and never directed us to pray to any other. Every attempt therefore to prove that such a person as this,—a person to whom no one in the time of our Lord or his apostles ever prayed; a person to whom there is no ascription of praise or glory in the whole Bible, if there really were such a person, -is equal to the great, self-existent, omniscient and omnipotent God and Father of all, who is above all,

and through all, and in us all; must, in my humble apprehension, totally fail.

Your remark, that "it is well known that Lucian ridiculed the Christians, just as some now taunt the Trinitarians, for making three to be one and one three," requires particular attention; as it is calculated to make us suppose that the doctrine of the Trinity was the belief of the Christians, or the great body of Christians, at a much earlier period than was really the case. The passage you allude to is in the Philopatris, which is usually published with Lucian's Dialogues, and is as follows: Και τινα επομωσομαι γε; Τρι. ύψιμεδοντα θεον, μεγαν, αμβροτον, ουρανιωνα, υίον πατρος, πνευμα εκ πατρος εκπορευομένον, έν εκ τριών, και εξ ένος τρια ταυτα νομιζε.- Ζήνα τονδ' ήγου θεων. Κρι. αριθμεείν διδασκεις, και όρχος ή αριθμητική. Και γαρ αριθμεεις ώς Νικομαχος ό Γερασηνος. Ουκ οιδα γαρ τι λεγεις, έν τρια, τρια έν. Here, one of the speakers bidding the other to swear "by the Supreme God, by the Son of the Father, and by the Spirit proceeding from the Father, one out of three, and three out of one, and to consider it as being Jupiter;—the other answers, You make me have recourse to numeration, and give me an arithmetical oath. I know not what you say, one three, and three one."

This passage you have alluded to, I have no doubt, under a full belief of its having been written by Lucian, for the purpose of making the same impression upon my mind as it evidently had upon yours,—that the

doctrine of the Trinity was the common faith of the Christians as early as the time of the Emperor Trajan, or about the year 113, when Lucian flourished. Had that writer been the author of it, however, we should have had no right to say that it was written to ridicule the Christians; for he does not tell us so; and there is ample evidence that the doctrine of the Trinity was not believed by the great body, or majority of Christians, till long after, probably not for two centuries after that time. We should not therefore, if Lucian had been the writer of this Dialogue, have been entitled to say that its object was to ridicule the Christians; but more probably to laugh at certain Christians, some philosophizing Christian writers of the day, for instance, who had, by their writings, brought themselves into the notice of the literary men of that period, and had, at least as the author of the Dialogue thought, rendered themselves ridiculous, and fair game for satire, by the singularity and extravagance of their theories. But to form an opinion of what Christianity really was, or what was the belief of the great body of the Christian world at that time, from an obscure passage in the writings of an enemy to Christianity; whose object, after all, might have been only to ridicule a few individuals; would be too much like judging of our Lord's doctrines and conduct, as has been too often done, by partially quoting another dialogue, namely, that between him and the Jews, recorded by St. John in the 10th chapter of his Gospel, from the

accusations of his enemies, who were continually misrepresenting him. And if the satire only applied to
certain individuals amongst the Christians, who had
advanced very strange notions, which the majority of
them did not believe, the ridiculing of them, and their
doctrines, could no more be said to be ridiculing the
Christians, than ridiculing the absurd doctrines, or
ridiculous practices, of any sect of Christians in more
modern times; such as transubstantiation, flagellation,
religious jumping, &c. &c. &c. could in the present
day. We might perhaps, had we lived in those times,
have been tempted to smile at any one, who should
have proposed to us an arithmetical oath, which we
had never heard of before.

I am under the necessity, however, of divesting this passage of the supposed antiquity which you have assigned to it, and referring it to a much later period, by stating, that in the judgement of the most eminent critics, the Philopatris in which it is found is not the work of Lucian, not like his writings, either in language, style, or manner; but the production of a very inferior writer, and of a much later date. Mr. Moyle thinks it to have been written in the time of Diocletian, or about the year 302. Gesner, not till the reign of the Emperor Julian, after the middle of the fourth century. And even Mr. Dodwell's opinion, which ascribes to it an earlier date, does not carry it back further than the reign of Gallienus, about the year 262; about which time we know that the doctrine of

the Trinity had made considerable progress amongst the philosophizing Christians of those times. Under such circumstances it is obvious, that even if it could be depended upon to shew what was the belief of the Christians then, it could be no authority whatever, to prove what it was in the time of Lucian, or for more than a century and a half after. But whenever, or by whomsoever, it was written, it has some awkward features, when compared with the Trinity of subsequent times, which renders it a most inauspicious passage for a modern Trinitarian to deal with; for it establishes the supremacy of the Father as the doctrine of the persons alluded to, whoever they were, describing one of the persons mentioned in it, as the supreme, sovereign, or reigning God, which implies his superiority over the other two, who are not stated to be equal to him: and though the one out of three, and three out of one, which is no very intelligible description, were to be considered Jupiter; yet we have no information how, or in what sense, the three were produced out of one, or what kind of union there was between the three, to make one out of them. The modern doctrine of the Trinity supposes the three to be in one; but this writer's description is a barbarous jumble, which though possibly not more absurd than some other theories, yet being more unusual to us, strikes us as more uncouth and ridiculous. The major part of the present race of Trinitarians, who either belong to, or have emanated from, the Church of

Rome, will also not know what to make of this writer's description of the Spirit, as proceeding from the Father only, whom they always describe as proceeding from the Father and the Son.

Before I close this article, it will be incumbent upon me, in proof of some of the remarks I have made, to produce a passage from Tertullian (one of the Latin fathers), who lived towards the conclusion of the second century, and at least half a century later than Lucian, to shew that the doctrine of the Trinity was not held by the majority of Christians in his time; adding to it two others from Origen (one of the Greek fathers) to the like effect.

The words of Tertullian are: "Simplices enim quique, ne dixerim imprudentes et idiotæ, quæ major semper credentium pars est, quoniam et ipsa regula fidei a pluribus diis seculi, ad unicum et Deum verum; transfert; non intelligentes unicum quidem, sed cum sua œconomia esse credendum, expavescunt ad œconomiam. Numerum et dispositionem Trinitatis, divisionem præsumunt Unitatis; quando Unitas, ex semetipsa derivans Trinitatem, non destruatur ab illa, sed administretur. Itaque duos, et tres jam jactitant à nobis prædicari; se vero unius Dei cultores præsumant. Quasi non et Unitas inrationaliter collecta hæresim faciat, et Trinitas rationaliter expensa veritatem constituat. Monarchiam, inquiunt, tenemus. Et ita sonum vocaliter exprimunt etiam Latini, etiam Opici, ut putes illos tam bene intelligere Monarchiam

quam enunciant. Sed Monarchiam sonare student Latini, œconomiam intelligere nolunt etiam Græci." Ad Praxeam, sect. 3, p. 502. "Common persons, not to say the uninformed and unlettered, who are always the major part of believers, because the rule of faith itself transfers from the many gods of the world to the only true God, not understanding that the only God is to be believed, but with his economy, dread the economy. They presume the number and disposition of a Trinity, to be a division of the Unity; when the Unity, deriving from itself a Trinity, is not destroyed, but governed by it. They therefore now boast, that two, and even three gods, are preached by us; but presume themselves to be worshippers of one God; as if the Unity irrationally comprehended did not make heresy, and the Trinity rationally considered constitute truth. We, they say, hold the Monarchy; and even the Latins, even the unlearned, so loudly express the word, that you might think they understood the Monarchy, as well as they pronounce it. But the Latins delight to bawl out the Monarchy, and even the Greeks will not understand the Œconomy."

From this passage it appears that Tertullian felt somewhat mortified, and complained rather angrily, that the majority of Christians in his time, both Latins and Greeks, were terrified at the Trinity, even such as it was then, considering it to be an infringement or division of the Unity; and charged him and his learned brethren, who laboured to introduce and make it ge-

neral among them, with being worshippers of two, and even three gods, holding themselves out to be the worshippers of one God, in opposition to the learned father and his coadjutors in those unpopular proceedings.

We are much obliged to the learned father for his fact; but when he appeals to reason, and speaks of what is rational and irrational, we can reason as well as he, and are not afraid to enter the lists with him; no, nor to pronounce that the plain unlettered men, whom he, by a kind of side wind, accuses of having irrationally comprehended the Unity, had more rational views upon the subject than himself. Their ideas of the Unity of the Deity as being unequivocally and strictly one, the monarch, or sole ruler of the universe, is consonant to every principle of true reason and sound philosophy. The mind assents at once, without difficulty, without requiring any laboured explanations or subtleties to make us comprehend it. But at the idea of three being one, as has been justly observed, reason stands aghast, and no human mind can be reconciled to it, who has not been brought up in the belief of it, or been overpowered by a multitude of nice and elaborate refinements and distinctions.

The following passage from Origen, who, though partly contemporary with Tertullian, lived some years later, manifests the very same state of things, or one very similar to it, when he wrote; so as to take away all doubt of what his meaning and that of Tertullian was, and what was the belief of the multitude in the

Christian world, at the times they respectively composed the works in which these passages are found. His words are, Ούτω τοινυν οί μεν τινές μετεχουσιν αυτου εν αρχη λογ8 και προς τον Θεον, και Θευ λογυ, ώσπερ Ωσηε, και Ησαιας, και Ιερεμιας, και ει τις έτερος τοι8τον έωυτον παρεστησεν ώς τον λογον κυριου, η τον λογον γενεσθαι προς αυτον Έτεροι δε οί μηδεν ειδοτες, ει μη Ιησουν Χριστον, και τουτον εσταυρωμένον, τον γενομένον σαρκα λογον, το παν νομιζοντες ειναι του λογου Χριστον κατα σαρκα μονον γινωσκουσι. Τουτο δε εστι το πληθος πεπιστευκεναι νομιζομενων. Com. in Joh. v. 2. p. 49. "There are, who partake of the Logos, which was from the beginning, the Logos that was with God, and the Logos that was God, as Hosea, Isaiah, and Jeremiah, and any other that speaks of him, as the Logos of God, or the Logos that was with him. But there are others who know nothing, but of Jesus Christ, and him crucified, the Logos that was flesh; thinking that they have every thing of the Logos, when they acknowledge Christ according to the flesh. Such is the multitude of those who are called Christians."

He afterwards says: Τα δε πληθη των πεπιστευκείαι νομιζομενων τη σκια του λογου, και εχι τω αληθινώ λογω εν τη ανεωγοτι ερανώ τυγχανοντι μαθητευεται. "The multitudes of believers are instructed in the shadow of the Logos, and not in the true Logos of God, which is in the open heaven." Com. in Joh. v. 2. p. 52.

Now how could it possibly have happened, that the multitudes—that is the great body of believers—were

instructed only in the shadow of the Logos; and not in the true Logos? Our Lord emphatically declared that his Gospel was preached to the poor; that is, to the great mass of mankind; and, as if to take away all pretence for supposing that any thing was to be kept back, expressly commanded his apostles, "that what he had told them in darkness, they should speak in light; that what they had heard in the ear, they should proclaim upon the house-tops." Matt. x. 27. And that they should preach the Gospel to every creature: Mark xvi. 15. The apostles on their parts appear to have acted in obedience to these commandments. They did not content themselves with preaching a part of it only to every creature. They did not rob the poor of the best part of their spiritual food, concealing from the multitude the most material doctrines of the gospel. On the contrary, their converts were assured that they had declared to them the whole counsel of God. When was it then that the knowledge of the true Logos began to be concealed, and only the shadow of the Logos to be preached? and how could the minds of the multitude, who had once learnt the doctrine of the true Logos from our Lord and his apostles and their immediate successors, be ever divested of it again? What was to prevent them from teaching it to their children, and they to their children? Was there any precept in Scripture forbidding it? Who can avoid believing then, that, the true Logos having been preached by our Lord and his followers to the multitude, the latter were well instructed in it: but that by degrees, some of the more learned and philosophical Christians had adopted different ideas concerning it, and had taken it into their heads to fancy that the true Logos was something which the great mass of Christians in those days had not been taught, did not understand, and would not acknowledge; and which none of these supereminently learned teachers, who imagined themselves so much better informed than the rest of their Christian brethren, could venture to instruct them in?

The same learned writer had before given a pretty striking proof of the prudent caution which at that time it was found necessary to observe in this respect, in the following words: Και τουτο δε ειδεναι εχρην, ότι ώσπερ εστι νομος σκιαν παρεχων των μελλοντων αγαθων, ύπο τε κατ' αληθειαν καταγγελλομενε νομου δηλουμενων, ούτω και ευαγγελιον σκιαν μυστηριων Χριστου διδασκει, το νομιζομένον ύπο παντων των εντυγχωνοντων νοεισθαι. Ο δε Φησεν Ιωαννης ευαγγελιον ωιωνιον, οικειως αν λεχθησομενον πνευματικόν, σαφως παριστησι τοις νόβσι τα παντα ενωπιον περι υίου του θεου. Διοπερ αναγκαιον πνευματικως, και σωματικως χριστιανίζειν και όπου μεν χρητο σωματικον κερυσσειν ευαγγελιον, Φασκοντα μηδεν ειδεναι τοις σαρκικοις η Ιησουν Χριστον και τουτον εσταυρωμενον, τουτον ποιητεον. επαν δε ευρεθωσι κατηρτισμένοι τω πνευματι και καρποφορουντες εν αυτώ, ερώντες του ουράνιου σοφιάς, μεταδοτεον αυτοις του λογου επανελθοντος απο του σεσαρκωσθαι, εφ' ό ην εν αρχη προς τον 9εον. "This we ought to understand, that as the Law was a shadow of good things to come, so the Gospel teaches a shadow of the mysteries of Christ, as it is considered to be understood by the generality. But that which John calls the everlasting Gospel, and which may be more properly called the spiritual, instructs the intelligent very clearly concerning the Son of God. Therefore the Gospel must be taught both corporeally and spiritually; and when it is necessary we must preach the corporeal gospel, saying to the carnal, that we know nothing but Jesus Christ, and him crucified: but when persons are found confirmed in the Spirit, bringing forth fruit in it, and in love with heavenly wisdom, we must impart to them the Logos returning from his bodily state, in that in which he was in the beginning with God." Com. in John, vol. ii. p. 9.

To what can we ascribe this curious caution, if the great body of Christians were at that time Trinitarians, or the belief of the Trinity was then considered necessary to salvation? Had either been the case, why should this venerable Father and their other instructors have hesitated to preach to all Christians truly, and explicitly, those great truths which it was of so much importance for them all to be well acquainted with, that their eternal salvation depended upon their knowing and believing them? Why should they have hesitated a moment to declare to them, as the apostles have told us that they did to the Christians in their time, the whole counsel of God? Their neglecting so to do was, upon this supposition,—not only a

highly criminal breach of a most solemn duty, but a breach of duty committed without any rational motive: but if the great majority of Christians in those days were not Trinitarians, but on the contrary adverse to the introduction even of those doctrines which led to the doctrine of the Trinity, the problem is solved at once. If their minds would have been shocked at any thing inconsistent with the monarchy of the Father, it will be obvious that the learned writer knew full well, that had he ventured to speak out, like Tertullian, to the mixed multitude of Greek Christians, with whom he was conversant, he would have heard their voices raised as loudly in favour of the monarchy of the Father, as Tertullian had those of the Latins. He therefore took a more prudent course.

The refined speculations of this eloquent and learned writer, and other men of superior learning who had adopted similar opinions, were not calculated to meet the public ear in that early age: no, these their doctrines were to be preached only to those whose minds had been prepared for them, to the chosen few, who had been initiated privately into these abstruse mysteries; but were not to be hazarded before the multitude, who knew nothing about them, and would, it was well known, have instantly rejected them, had they been publicly preached. By degrees, however, more and more would be brought over by men of literary character and attainments; and the new system, if it did not originate from, bearing at least a very considerable

resemblance to, the doctrines of Plato and other philosophers (which were then held in great estimation amongst the higher classes of mankind, a large proportion of whom, though they joined in the idolatrous worship then established by law in their respective countries, had notwithstanding embraced these philosophical tenets respecting the Deity); being also on account of this resemblance likely to be eagerly adopted by those who were converted to Christianity from these classes, and consequently to gain ground over what was considered to be the belief of the vulgar; might be expected to become, at last, the system of the majority, or at least of the majority of those who had much influence in the Christian world: and when in another hundred years this had actually taken place, we hear of no more caution upon the subject; but on the contrary, they who did not embrace the prevailing creed were stigmatized without any reserve, in direct and express terms, as heretics; and, when their adversaries had obtained the assistance of the temporal power, persecuted, and at length even put to death, without mercy.

Though I agree with you, that we are not to consider the Fathers as authorities in the interpretation of the Scriptures, but are bound to examine and judge for ourselves: yet we cannot avoid considering their testimony to be of great weight, when they are relating matters of fact; more especially when they are facts militating against their own particular opinions,

which, we must bear in mind too, shocking as they then appeared to the great body of plain unlettered Christians, who at that time constituted the majority of believers, were much less calculated to shock their minds than those which succeeded them in the course of another century; as one corruption paved the way for, and was closely followed by another: for the Trinity of the Fathers of that period, as declared by themselves (of which I can produce very clear and satisfactory proofs from their own writings), consisted of three unequal persons, of whom the Father was supreme.

We have therefore, first, the joint testimony of some of the Fathers of that early age, and of the great body, or multitude, of Christians whose sentiments they have favoured us with, that the doctrine of the Trinity was not at that time the belief of the Christians; and 2dly the testimony of the former, that such a Trinity as is now believed was not the belief even of themselves, who ranked among the learned and philosophical part of the Christian community. Of what value then, in opposition to all this, would such an obscure passage have been,—had it been, as you have supposed, the production of Lucian himself? but considered as written by nobody knows whom, who flourished nobody knows when, and lived nobody knows where, it sinks at once into complete insignificance.

Such proofs as this, of dubious origin, and of no authority, dug up at random from the mouldering rubbish of antiquity, are like certain dead bodies, which

having been buried for centuries in spots particularly favourable to the partial preservation of the human form, though on being accidentally disinterred they present at first view an appearance most perfect, fresh, and fair, yet will not bear handling; but the moment they are touched, crumble into dust.

Having now answered, article by article, every argument which your Letter contains in favour of the doctrine of the Trinity, I hasten with peculiar pleasure to unite with you in your truly excellent and pious wish or prayer, "May the God of truth afford us grace to discover and embrace the truth, and lead us to those views which he best approves, and which will most promote his glory in our salvation!"

I shall be always most happy to hear from you on these, or any other subjects: assuring you that the freedom which inseparably belongs to a fair and proper discussion of the points upon which we may happen to differ, will never, in the slightest degree, interfere with the high opinion I have always entertained of you as a man and a Christian, increased by that friendly solicitude for my welfare which has given birth to the present amicable controversy between us. The time, we know, will arrive, when we shall all be of one heart and one mind, which God will bring about in its proper season, as to all men. The more speedily it takes place as to ourselves in particular, the greater reason we shall have to rejoice, and to bless his name, whose mercy endureth for ever.

Sincerely wishing you a complete restoration to health, and the full enjoyment of all the blessings which the religion established by our great Lord and Master Jesus Christ is calculated to produce, as well in this world as in that which is to come, I am,

My dear Sir,

Yours most truly and faithfully



### A FOURTH

# LETTER

TO

## A PROTESTANT DIVINE,

## In defence of Unitarianism;

By another BARRISTER.

Magna est veritas et prævalebit.

#### London:

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tion of the theological and miscellaneous works of Dr. Priestley now publishing, Mr. Rutt, for the very correct information, that the spurious text mentioned, page 231, as having had so much influence on the mind of that excellent and liberal-minded Trinitarian, the late Dr. Doddridge, was not, as the Author had apprehended, I John v. 7. the Doctor having inserted that text between brackets, and referred to it as doubtful; but another, namely, Rev. i. 11. "I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last," which we have the authority of Archbishop Newcome, and Griesbach, and the host of MSS. cited by the latter, for pronouncing to be equally spurious, and striking it out altogether, as they have both done. Though this does not in the least affect the Author's argument, which the Doctor's reliance upon either text will support, yet he is happy to be afforded an opportunity of doing justice to the memory of Dr. Doddridge, who, it certainly appears, did not rely upon I John v. 7. when, in consequence of the strong and well founded remarks of Sir Isaac Newton against its authenticity, it had ceased to be quoted as an authority, by most judicious critics, though it was not then so universally exploded, as it has been since it received the coup de grace from the hands of the late Professor Porson. What to their of the

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THE Author, in reply to the Divine's fourth letter, shows that Origen differed from him entirely, by absolutely denying that the Scriptures apply the article to 9:05, when speaking of Christ, but to the Father only; and that both he, and Eusebius, lay it down, that Christ was not God over all; but that this was the peculiar title of the Father. p. 287.-The doctrine of the Trinity having made considerable advances in Origen's time, he believed Christ to be God, but to be inferior to the Father. The Trinity then very different from that of modern times. p. 288 .- The author's quotation from Origen, a complete answer to the Divine's positions, that & Stor, God, with the article, is applicable to Christ, and that the Fathers considered the absence of the article no evidence of the reading a God. p. 288.—Reply to the statement, that the author objects to the authenticity of the two first chapters of Matthew contrary to the evidence of MSS, and the testimony of history, and to Griesbach. p. 289. -The author opposes to their authenticity, not only earlier MSS, than those collated by Griesbach; but the testimony of persons living at the time of our Saviour, who knew him well, and contradicted the story of the miraculous conception contained in them. If the statements in these chapters had been true, our Lord could never have been supposed to have been the son of Joseph, nor could his brothers and sisters have been ignorant that he was the Messiah. p. 289. 290.—He also opposes to their authenticity, the entire silence that prevails in every other part of the New Testament as to the whole of their contents. p. 291.-Also the absurd, ridiculous and puerile nature of many of the accounts contained in them, as well as their contradicting each other, and other parts of Scripture. p. 292. The author vindicates his remark, that the title, The Book of the Generation of Jesus Christ, the Son of David, is not at all fit to be the title of the whole work, showing that the Divine's reference to the book of Genesis is not at all in point, and why the five books of Moses were called by their present Hebrew names. p. 292-3.-That Matthew wrote but one Gospel, which had a little that suited the whole of it, if we reject the two first chapters, and their unnecessary and incongruous title, p. 294. -Absurdity of retaining them and following the rule adopted for the title of the book of Genesis. Ib. - Setting aside these two chapters and the two first chapters ascribed to Luke, to which there are equal objections, it will appear that all the Gospels begin about the same time, namely, the preaching of John the Baptist, before which nothing was known of Christ personally as such, no not by John himself, who was not acquainted with his person, which is incredible if the two supposed first chapters of Luke are genuine, p. 295 .-

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XXX

Stephen, mere requests to one personally, and visibly present, and not prayers. God and Christ as much distinguished from each other, as Abraham and Lazarus. As much reason for concluding that Luke did not consider Christ, who could not stand at his own right hand, to be God, as that he did not consider Lazarus, who could not be in his own bosom, to be Abraham. p. 357.-Paul's statement, 2 Cor. xii. 8, that he besought the Lord thrice that the thorn in the flesh might depart from him, admits of a similar explanation. That of the Trinitarians is at variance with the express injunction of our Lord, and with the uniform practice of all the Apostles. p. 358.-The texts Acts ix. 14, 1 Cor. i. 2, which the common version represents as relating to persons who call on the name of the Lord Jesus, may be rendered 'as relating to persons called by that name,' and also in other senses. p. 359. -The Apostolic benediction, 2 Cor. xiii. 14, no prayer, but a pious wish, and it is not addressed to the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, but to the Corinthians only. p. 360,-If the Divine's hypothesis were correct, that it does not comport with the office the Holy Spirit holds, to be addressed in prayer as the Son, nor with that of the Son, to be addressed as frequently as the Father, then taking the instances he mentions of the latter, which were only when he was personally and visibly present, we should have a Trinity of three personal distinctions, the first of whom is to be prayed to without restriction; the second, only when he is personally and visibly present; and the third, not at all. p. 361. - Whatever might he thought of this, if our prayers were in conformity to it, we should pray to the Father only, and the Unitarians might join, p. 362.—The passages John xiv. 26, John xvi. 13, do not prove the personality of the Holy Spirit. If such an important doctrine, upon the belief of which men's salvation is made to depend, had been true, it would have been clearly and specifically revealed, and not left to be made out by inference from putting the masculine pronoun sasses into one scale, to balance the neutral article to in the other. p. 362.-The frequent personifications of the Scripture writers, and of John in particular, account for the introduction of the word szures, and when we find the name of God, the breath of God, and almost all his attributes personified, no wonder that his Spirit is personified also. p. 363.—The Spirit when sent, represented in Acts ii, as a thing, as something with which persons were filled, which was poured out, shed forth, and made a present of to multitudes, meaning nothing but miraculous powers, communicated not by a supposed Holy Spirit, but by Christ himself; and the Apostle Peter says not a syllable about a peason called the Holy Spirit, though expressly treating on the subject of the Holy Spirit. No Trinitarian could have given such an account of the Son and Spirit, as this Apostle does, p. 364.-The whole of the text, Acts x. 38, representing God as having anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit, and with power, would be incongruous, and ridiculous, upon the supposition of the Holy Spirit being a person. p. 365 .- Figurative use of the word Spirit, 2 Kings ii. 9, in the case of Elijah and Elisha. p. 366.—Instances of the Spirit being said to dwell in persons, and of Faith, the word of Christ, and sin, being said to do the like: also of the Spirit being

said to be given sometimes by measure, and sometimes without measure, p. 369.—The term 'spirit of a person' frequently used to denote the person himself, and the Spirit of God used to mean the same thing as to God, that the spirit of a man does to a man. Ib .- No instance in the Scriptures of the Spirit, though it was to lead the Disciples into all truth, having communicated to them the knowledge that it was a person in the Godhead, distinct from, but equal to, the Father and Son, and together with them, to be praised, worshipped, and glorified, or that any one ever did praise, worship, or glorify it. It follows, therefore, demonstrably, that it is not the truth. Ib.-We may make sense of the passage in John without understanding the Spirit to be a real person, as well as of that in Prov. viii. 1-4, without understanding Wisdom to be a real person. There is no reason for adopting a construction not sanctioned by any plain declaration in Scripture, which has occasioned the setting up an imaginary person, and investing him with the attributes of the Supreme Being, and has ended in our praying to, worshipping and glorifying him, which is irreconcileable both with the precepts, and practice, of every one of the Prophets, Apostles, and Evangelists, and of our Lord himself. p. 368 .-The two texts, Matt. xxiv. 36, Mark xiii, 32, stating that our Lord did not know the day of Judgement, are so clear, that the only difficulty is to create a doubt about their meaning: but it is very doubtful whether the word order is to he understood in the sense of the corresponding Hebrew word in the Hyphil, meaning 'to make known.' Why it is not to be so understood. p. 371. Ephes. iii. 10, demonstrates that the Apostle Paul, who was a Hebrew, and accustomed to the Hyphil, knew better when addressing Gentiles who knew nothing of the Hyphil, than to employ the Greek verb wise, which signifies only to know, in the sense of 'making known,' a sense in which none of them would have understood it. He therefore used another word, namely γνωρισθη, from γνωρίζω, one of the ordinary meanings of which is 'to make known.' p. 372.-Clear that our Lord did not speak, nor the Apostle Matthew write, in the Hyphil; which is confirmed by Mark. p. 373.—The proposed version of 'making known,' tried by the test of putting it into the text, and its absurdity thereby demonstrated. p. 374.-The plain and original sense of the word not only presents us with a clear and consistent sense, but also with a noble climax. p. 375.—The Divine misled by the common version, in supposing that Christ distinguishes himself from men. The Greek word is ouders, no one, which gives an intelligible and beautiful meaning, without any such distinction. lb.-Whether these texts refer to the day of judgement, or not, does not affect the argument. They prove, upon the authority of Christ himself, that Christ is not God. p. 376.-Not contrary to Scripture to affirm, that God can qualify one of the human race for the office of Universal Judge. Christ originally not so qualified, but required to be taught, to learn, and to be made perfect, and it is God who dwells in him, and acts by him, and is so to do in the future state. Ib .- The words 'mere creature,' a Trinitarian gloss. p. 579 .- The Divine too cautious to take the affirmative upon him, and to assert that the ALMICHTY cannot qualify a mere creature to judge the whole human race, Id. - Acts xvii.

30, 31, would dispose of the quotation, Psalm 1. 6, that God is judged himself, even if the latter referred to the general judgement, which it is likely it does not. p. 380.-Not clear that St. Paul in Rom. xiv. 10.12, quotes Is. xlv. 23; but if it were, it would furnish no proof of Christ being God. The judgements of Christ, who is the agent, and called a man, and nothing more, are the judgements of God, who is the principal; and bowing the knee to him, when invested with the character of God's representative, is in effect bowing it to God; and giving an account of himself to him upon the same occasion. is giving an account of himself to God. p. 381.-This illustrated by the King's debtors accounting to him, and the King's judges pronouncing his judgements .- All is plain as A B C, except when connected with religious controversy. 1b .- Our Lord's being the son of man, not the strangest of all reasons for all judgement being committed to him, but the reason he himself has assigned for it, p. 382 .- 'Son of man' means nothing more than a mere man. The Prophet Ezekiel called so more than fifty times. If Christ being God, was the reason why all judgement was committed to him, that would be the strongest reason, and would have been most frequently mentioned; but Christ and his Apostles, who have assigned the former reason for it, have never mentioned this. p. 382.-Nor would God's appointment of Christ to the office, because he is the son of man, be any reason for every one of us being appointed to it, but the contrary. p. 384.—The assertion, John xvii. 3, that the Father is the only true God, is not merely in opposition to idols, but stands absolute, and excludes every other being, but the Father, from being such, and consequently excludes the Son and Spirit, p. 384,-When one of two persons calls the other the only true God, we cannot, believing him to speak the truth, contradict him, and say that he himself is also the only true God. Christ only asserted that the Father was the only true God, but said not a syllable of the Son or Spirit, much less of all three being so, p. 386, -The Almighty Father, who spake by the Prophets, has declared by them, that he the Father alone, is God. p. 387 .- In this passage our Lord mentions himself as contradistinguished from the Father, and applies the epithet of 'the only true God' to the Father, and not to himself, thereby excluding himself, and acknowledging that he was not God. 1b .- 1 John v. 20. We know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding that we may know him that is true, and we are in him that is true, in or by his Son Jesus Christ, 'This is the true God and eternal life,' explained and shewn to be adverse to the Trinitarian scheme, but perfectly in unison with John xvii. 3, each text throwing great light upon the other. p. 388 .- Further remarks on 1 John v. 20, and Griesbach's marking the words Ingov Xergrov, as doubtful. p. 390 .-Reply to the objection that if 1 Cor, viii. 4, 6, excludes the son from being God, it excludes the Father from being Lord, that both allegations stand absolute, and are perfectly consistent, the first excluding all persons but the Father from being God, and the second, all persons but the Son, from being Lord to us. p. 391.-We have only to inquire in what sense Christ is alleged to be Lord to us, which St. Peter shews, Acts ii. 36, to have been, that of a

delegated Lord appointed by the Father, in which sense there is no other Lord to us but Christ. p.393. - That the word 'Lord,' here used, does not mean. God, but some other person, and means Lord in spiritual things; that the Heathens having many Gods, had many Lords in spiritual things under their Gods, whilst we Christians having but one God, have but one Lord in spiritual things under our God. This, a beautiful and well connected meaning, which renders the whole passage perfectly clear. p. 394.-But if the words were to be understood in a more general sense, the Apostle Paul shews, 1 Cor. xv. 27, that the Father must upon all such occasions be considered to be excepted. p. 395.—But when the sole sovereignty of the Father is mentioned in Scripture, there is not one solitary instance of any such exception in favour of the Son, or in favour of the Holy Ghost. In this very passage, where the Father is expressly excepted, the Holy Ghost is not, nor is any notice taken of it. The necessary inference from this, p. 396,-If the Apostle had not been an Unitarian himself, he could never have expressed himself as he has done, which would have been calculated to mislead his hearers, and make them. what in fact they were, all Unitarians. Ib .- Why the Author quoted Dr. Doddridge's interpretation of the phrase 'ascending up into Heaven,' but rejects his notion of the eternal generation of the Son, p. 397 .- Other proofs from John vi. that ascending up into Heaven, and coming down from Heaven, cannot mean a literal, and local ascent, or descent. What they do mean. p. 398.—The Author rejects the existing creeds, 1st, because they contain doctrines not only not contained in, but contrary to, the Scriptures; and secondly, because he denies the authority of any uninspired men to establish creeds, as necessary to be believed by Christians. The creeds they have framed contradictory and absurd, and have been productive of incalculable discord, misery, and bloodshed. p. 400.-Contradictions in, and additions made to, the creed called the Apostles' Creed, which the Apostles however had no concern in the fabrication of, p. 401. Observations upon the Nicene creed, which begins scripturally, but afterwards represents the almighty, eternal, immortal, and invisible God to have been crucified, dead and buried. Also, in flat contradiction to St. Paul, that Christ's Kingdom shall have no end; and also, without any warrant in Scripture, that the Holy Ghost is the Lord and giver of life, that he is, together with the Father and Son, to be worshipped and glorified, which he is never required to be, nor is ever said to have been by any one in Scripture, and that he spake by the prophets, contrary to Heb. i. 1, which states it to have been the Father who spake by the Prophets. p. 401. Remarks upon the creed called the Creed of St. Athanasius, whose creed it is not, a creed which all parties have long wished us well rid of, and which has been struck out in America. Defective, unwarranted, and inconsistent statements of p. 404. Refutation of the Divine's assertion, that fact confirms what the Scriptures fully testify, that the reception of the Trinitarian doctrines so as to render them vital and efficacious, depends upon a certain state of mind produced by the Holy Spirit, p. 405. In Christianity every thing necessary to make us wise unto salvation is placed in broad daylight, and open sun-shine, but we are too apt to prefer the darkness of MYSTERY to the light of Revelation. p. 407. Dr. Stock does not support his change of opinion either by reason or Scripture. Ib .- The two supposed first Chapters of Matthew not confirmed by the supposed corresponding chapters of Luke, for they are completely at war with each other. p. 408. Assumption of the term 'Evangelical' by the Calvinists. They ought rather to be called Eristo-LARIANS. Ib.—The Divine's statement, that Unitarian sentiments appear to leave a creature who has sinned, without a foundation on which he can stand at the tribunal of his judge, that the atonement which the Scriptures declare to be the grand design of Christ's coming, requires the divinity of Christ, that it may satisfy divine justice, and that if his divinity and the atonement could be disproved, we should have our religion to seek, for that of the Scriptures could not meet the necessities of fallen man, furnish another melancholy instance of the manner in which the sacred writings are appealed to, for what they do not contain. Inquiry where the Scriptures make any such declarations. p. 409 .- No such word as 'atonement' in the whole of the New Testament, except once in the common version, where the word 2272layn is mistranslated so. When translated rightly, 'reconciliation,' it is the reverse of the atonement, p. 410,-The very passage in which it is thus mistranslated, Rom. v. 10, would with such mistranslation be destructive of the Calvinistic doctrine. Ib .- Strange notion, that every offence against an infinite Being, is an infinite offence, and requires infinite satisfaction, or infinite punishment. A finite being cannot commit an infinite offence. p. 411 .- Such an offence, though committed against an infinite Being, cannot therefore become infinite. p. 412.—Not true that all offences committed against Sovereigns are punished more severely than such as are committed against subjects. Attempts against their life or throne are, because by such attempts the one may be destroyed, and the other overthrown, but the King of kings holds his existence and authority by no such precarious tenure. He laughs at all such attempts against him, and makes them all subservient to the accomplishment of his purposes. p. 413.-Comparison of the supposed Evangelical, and the Unitarian systems. The former represents the Supreme Being to be a compound Deity, a triune God, enshrined in MYSTERY, and described in characters which would compel us to consider him, if we believed them, to be an unjust, malignant, and cruel Divinity. It represents him as having, from all eternity, predestinated the great mass of his intelligent offspring to exquisite and never-ending torments, and as having, well-knowing it, thought fit to call them into existence. p. 414.-Nature of the covenant it supposes to have been made with Adam, which no wise or good Being would have permitted him to enter into. p. 415 .- A bright and glittering prize held up by it to him, which he, the promiser, knew at the time would turn up a most dreadful blank. lb. - An infernal spirit also let loose upon him, without any intimation of his being exposed to such an unknown enemy, p. 416.—This spirit of darkness represented as having been long at war with the Almichty, and as having actually got the better of him, and frustrated his intentions as to the greater

part of mankind, p. 417 .- A gross libel upon the Majesty on High, to represent him as having appointed Adam to a trust for thousands of millions of his descendants, which he knew he was utterly unfit for. lb.-Effects of a single breach of it upon his unconscious and unfortunate offspring. Their utter inability to help themselves, whilst he who alone can assist them, extends his favour only to a few, leaving all the rest to their melancholy fate. Ib.-He is represented also as calling on these unhappy victims, to look unto him and be saved; which is the greatest mockery and delusion, when he knows that not one of them can obey the call. p. 418 .- Malignity must be the predominant feature in the character of such a being. The fabled Divinity of antiquity who devoured his own offspring, was mercy itself compared to him. p. 419 .--The latter had motives for his conduct, which the former had not. Ih .- Should we not hold up a buman father or Sovereign, who should act so, as a horrible and execrable tyrant? Would fallen creatures who had broken the laws of such a Being, have any foundation on which to stand at his tribunal? Would not innumerable multitudes of them, notwithstanding the supposed atonement, be hurried from thence to everlasting torment? Would this system meet the wants and wishes of fallen man? p. 420 .- This system also represents the Supreme Father in the character of a hard unfeeling creditor, p. 421.-lt denies him the power of pardoning offences, until the full punishment for them has been inflicted upon somebody, which is no pardon at all. It imputes to him the punishment of the innocent, instead of the guilty, and this it calls forgiveness. Supposed justice, which requires this, a justice of their own making. Ib.

Yet this is the golden image which Nebuchadnezzar has set up, and which we are commanded to fall down and worship. p. 422.-Contrast between this grim Idol, and the God of Holy Writ. - The latter described in Scripture as the father and friend of all, as infinitely benevolent, and abundantly pardoning all who forsake their evil ways, and return to him, without saying a word about punishing them, or any one else, in their stead, as a Being who blotteth out our transgressions for his own name's sake, whose anger endureth but a moment, who is good to all, and whose loving kindness and tender mercies are over all his works. Ib. - The popular system contradicts all this, and ascribes to him attributes and conduct the very reverse. p. 423.—The language. of Christ in the New Testament to the same effect as that of the Prophets in the Old, representing his Father, and ours, as full of mercy and goodness, as one who actually forgives transgressions and sins, who will forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive others theirs, which we are not to do by getting full satisfaction made for them by some one else. p. 424,-When asked what must be done to inherit eternal life, he tells the inquirer at once, without troubling him with any of the subtleties adopted in later ages. Had the doctrines of the infinite satisfaction, and atonement, been essential and fundamental parts of the Gospel, and men's salvation depended upon the belief of them, he would not have been quite silent about them, p. 425 .- The language of the Apostles in perfect unison, representing the Supreme Being to be love itself, to be one who wills that all men shall be saved, and his will must be accomplished; to be

one who is the Saviour of all men, especially of those that believe, which shews that those who do not believe, will, at some time or other, be saved also. lb .-Further proofs of the salvation of all men through Christ, from the Epistles to the Romans and Corinthians, and John i. 29, p. 426.—Punishment reserved for the impenitent in a future state, not to be vindictive, but correctional. Where sin hath abounded, grace is much more to abound. Christ is to reign till he has subdued all enemies, when the last enemy, and he only, is to be destroyed, and God to be all among all: which could not be, if there were to be thousands of millions of intelligent beings in a state of rebellion and enmity against him to all eternity. p. 429 .- A more rational construction, that after the resurrection there shall be a state of punishment called the second death, for the impenitent, who, having risen with all their vicious habits and propensities, will require a long and severe course of discipline so fully to reform them as to prevent all future relapses, and that Christ shall reign, till by the salutary, though severe measures of his administration, he shall have completely subdued them, and from enemies, have converted them all into friends, and all shall have benefited by his mission; when the second death having answered all its purposes, that last enemy shall be destroyed, and then Christ himself, having fulfilled all the objects of his mission, having died for all, and saved all, shall deliver up the kingdom to God, even the Father, that God may be all among all, and universal goodness, virtue and happiness prevail for ever. p. 431.—A glorious and happy consummation, fully justifying the ways of God to man, and shewing the Gospel to be indeed good news to all mankind. This the religion, and the only religion, which can be universal; the only religion which can give, a creature who has sinned, a foundation on which he can stand at the tribunal of his judge; the only religion which can meet the necessities of fallen man, for it meets, and completely provides for, the necessities of them all. p. 432.—It is the most beautiful, as well as beneficent system our warmest wishes could have aspired to. Its nature and character designate it, as having emanated from Him, whose most distinguished attribute is universal benevolence. How delightful to live under the government of 'such a glorious and beneficent sovereign! With breasts glowing with gratitude, we can repose all our cares upon him, and not feel the desolating sense of despair, even if any who are dear to us, wander from his ways and die impenitent. Ib .- Not to be wondered that we who entertain these views of the character and government of the Supreme Being, and his gracious designs towards ourselves and our fellow men, should bind them to our hearts, and cherish them as heavenly treasures. Conclusion, p. 434.

## LETTER IV.

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MY DEAR SIR,

My third Letter, which was not sent till after I had received your fourth, you will find to have anticipated some of the remarks contained in the latter.

In this Letter you tell me you do not see what end the passage I quoted from Origen (p. 19) can answer; for that if it be true, that auto deity be expressed with the article, then Jesus Christ is underived deity, for which you quote again, John xx. 28, Rom. ix. 5, which I have already considered, and shown clearly that neither of them proves any thing like it. You add, "that Origen himself, believing Jesus Christ to be the true God, could not see any discrepancy between the manner in which the Scriptures apply the article to Seos, when speaking of Christ, and the orthodox doctrine, as it was then thought, of the proper deity of Christ." But Origen differs from you entirely, and did not entertain the opinions you are desirous of ascribing to him. On the contrary, he absolutely denies that the Scriptures apply the article to Christ, and expressly affirms it to be applied to the Father

only, whom he quotes our Saviour as calling the only true God (p. 19); and in another place (p. 173) declares it to be rash, and inconsistent with our Saviour's own words, to say, as you do, in consequence of misinterpreting Rom. ix. 5, that he is God over all: and Eusebius, as I have remarked already, in still stronger terms lays it down as the constant, known doctrine of the church, that Christ is not God over all; but that this is the peculiar title of the Father, and that whoever applies this title to the Son cannot be a pious person (p. 174).

The doctrine of the Trinity having made considerable advances in the time of Origen, he did, it is true, believe Jesus Christ to be God; but he believed him at the same time to be inferior to the Father. The Trinity of those days was so very different a thing from the Trinity of modern times, that if you, my dear Sir, were known to entertain the same ideas of it as were then entertained, and to be of the same opinion upon the subject as Origen was, I am quite certain that you would not continue to hold for six months, that situation which you at present fill, with so much credit to yourself, and benefit to the public.

Permit me now to inform you what end the quotation from Origen can answer on my side of the question. Nothing less than furnishing, as far as the opinion of that early, eminent, and learned Father goes, a complete answer to your positions, "that the

term & Seos, God with the article, is applicable to Christ; that the Fathers considered the absence of the article no evidence of the reading, a God; and that it was never used against them when the Greek article was better understood than it is now." In this I have shown that he did not stand alone, whilst you have not been able to make it appear that he was in those times contradicted by any one.

You state, "that I object to the authenticity of the two first chapters of St. Matthew, contrary to the evidence of manuscripts and the testimony of history; and that Griesbach stamps them with the mark of unquestionable authenticity." To this I reply, that having been generally received previously to the existence of the present manuscripts, (none of which extend further back than the fourth century,) it is not to be expected that any of these should omit them: but you are not ignorant that there were manuscripts still more early, the existence of which we know, though they have not come down to us, which always omitted them. The evidence of history shows that they were objected to, and omitted, by whole bodies of Christians from the very earliest periods; and that truly eminent and impartial critic Griesbach, has only considered them genuine, for any thing that appears to the contrary, according to the now existing manuscripts, which were what he was concerned with, and was bound to determine upon, according to the plan of his invaluable work.

To their authenticity I oppose, not only the earlier

MSS. I have referred to, but the testimony of persons living at the very time our Saviour made his first appearance as a teacher, perhaps at the time he was born,-who knew him well, were nearly connected with him, and had every opportunity of knowing the facts mentioned in these chapters, if they had had any existence: I mean Philip, Nathaniel, and others mentioned in different parts of the New Testament of undisputed authority, particularly John i. 45, who contradicted the story of his miraculous conception contained in these chapters, by affirming him to be the Son of Joseph; whom they mention as his father, not his supposed father. If indeed the accounts given in these chapters, and in the two first supposed chapters of St. Luke be true, he could not have been supposed by any one then living in Judea, -much less by his own relations, apostles and friends, imbued as you represent them to have been, with previous sentiments—to be the son of Joseph; his supposed miraculous conception by a virgin having according to these accounts been prophesied hundreds of years before, and the extraordinary events attending his birth mentioned in these chapters, but which are no where else to be found, having been proclaimed not only to the whole nation, but even to persons living beyond the boundaries of Judea, and having not merely become matters of the most public notoriety, but having occasioned a great public calamity, which was likely to be remembered for centuries, namely, the murder of all the young

children under two years of age of an entire district: yet these persons, that is, Philip, Nathaniel, and others, —are represented in those parts of the Scriptures which are universally acknowledged to be genuine, as having found him, and having reported it to others as a discovery they had just made (John i. 45). And his own family, his own brothers and sisters, are represented as having been entirely ignorant, at the time he began to perform miracles, even that he was to be the Messiah (John vii. 5): some of his friends even inconsiderately imagining that he was beside himself, because he suffered himself to be so much engaged with the multitude, as to be unable even to eat bread. (Mark iii. 20, 21.)

I oppose also to the authenticity of these chapters, the deep and entire silence that prevails, in every other part of these very gospels, in every part of the two other gospels, and in every other part of the New Testament, respecting each and every of the extraordinary facts mentioned in these chapters; which were of the utmost importance if true, and quite as much requiring to be taught in those times,—at least to the converts in other countries, who could not be supposed to know them without being taught them,—as they are in the present, when they are as carefully inculcated and insisted upon, by those who have any belief in them, as any Christian doctrines whatever. Yet, astonishing as it would be if they were true, not one of them is in the most distant manner mentioned or

alluded to any where. This is not like the omission of a single miracle by one evangelist, and the supply of it by another, which you mention. It is the omission of an entire state of things, comprising most numerous and important events, and establishing a most important doctrine, necessary, if true, to be known and believed by all Christians in all ages. Hence it is apparent, that we have the testimony of history, of contemporaneous history, of history unquestionably authentic, history written by evangelists and apostles,—in direct opposition to these chapters.

I further oppose to them the absurd, ridiculous, and puerile nature of many of the accounts contained in them, their contradicting each other, and also contradicting other parts of Scripture which are undisputed; instances of which I have already furnished, and to which more may, if requisite, be added; and which, with the silence of every one of the other New Testament writers, all of whom were contemporaneous with Matthew and Luke, forms a strong body both of internal and external evidence against their authenticity. Let me ask you therefore, whether in the case of any other writers of antiquity upon any other subject, all these things would not be held, without hesitation, to be clear proofs of forgery?

You object to my remark, that the title prefixed to St. Matthew's Gospel, namely, The Book of the Generation of Jesus Christ the son of David, (being a title not at all fit for the whole work,) gives the two

chapters the appearance of having been a separate treatise, not originally belonging to the gospel; and tell me that this is a Hebraism, meaning the genealogy of Jesus Christ, with which the writer commences his gospel; and that without this it would have no commencement: and you refer me to the book of Genesis. which you say cannot be the title of a whole book. The substitution of the word 'genealogy' however, for 'generation,' makes no difference at all in this respect. Whether it be the book of the Generation, or the book of the Genealogy, of Jesus Christ, it is equally unfit to be the title of the whole Gospel. The book of Genesis which you refer to, is not at all in point. There was a reason for giving that book a particular designation, which does not exist in the present case; namely, that Moses wrote five books, which it was necessary to distinguish from one another. Accordingly each is distinguished in the Hebrew, (which seems to have escaped your recollection,) by the word it begins with, and by no other name whatever. Thus the name of his first book, which we call Genesis, is Berishith, meaning 'In the beginning;' of his second, which we call Exodus, Eleh Shemoth, meaning, 'These are the names'; of his third, which we call Leviticus, Vajikra, meaning, 'And he called'; of his fourth, which we call Numbers, Banridbar, meaning 'In the wilderness'; and of his fifth, which we call Deuteronomy, Eleh Hadebarim, meaning 'These are the words'. The only reasons therefore why the first book of Moses was called

Genesis, were because it happened to begin with that word, and required some name to distinguish it from his four other books, which were also designated in the same manner, without the least regard to the contents of them.

But St. Matthew wrote only one book, which had a distinct and appropriate title that suited the whole of it, namely, The Gospel, meaning The good news; and, from the time that other Gospels were published and in general circulation, the Gospel according to St. Matthew. Now if we reject the two first chapters, and the unnecessary and incongruous title of 'The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham,' we shall see how well its real title suits the whole of the book, which begins with the prediction of the good news it treats of by John the Baptist, goes on with the preaching of it, and the wonderful works performed in attestation of it by our Lord, and ends with the completion of it by his death and glorious resurrection and ascension as a pledge and pattern of our own. But if we retain the two first chapters and their ill-fated title, and follow the rule which has been adopted for the title of the first book of the Pentateuch, we shall have for the title of St. Matthew's Gospel, either The Gospel according to St. Matthew, called Abraham; or The Gospel according to St. Matthew, called the Book: or if we choose to add the whole of the second title to the first, it will stand The Gospel according to St.

Matthew called the Book of the Generation of Jesus, Christ, the Son of David, the Son of Abraham.— Whoever prefers either to the present name, may take which he pleases. If we read the whole as one title without any addition, The Gospel according to St. Matthew, the Book of the Generation of Jesus Christ, the Son of David, the Son of Abraham, it will be ridiculous, and double upon the face of it. If we read only The Book of the Generation of Jesus Christ, the Son of David, the Son of Abraham, it will be incomplete; for the genealogy is not a fiftieth part of the whole, and the other parts are of far more consequence than the genealogy; it will not shew whose Gospel it is, nor distinguish it from Luke's Gospel, which has a genealogy likewise.

Setting aside these two chapters, which to me appear plainly to have been added to this Gospel, and the two first chapters ascribed to St. Luke, to which there are equal objections, and which seem to have been added in like manner, and from similar motives,—it will appear that all the Gospels begin at about the same period, that is, the preaching of John the Baptist, and his public annunciation of Jesus as the Messiah; before which time nothing was known of Jesus Christ personally as such, nothing except through the medium of the Prophecies; no, not by John the Baptist himself, who does not appear to have been acquainted with his person, till he saw the spirit descending upon him like a dove at the time he baptized

him; for he expressly says twice, that he did not know him, (ch. i. 31, 33): -yet if the supposed two first chapters of St. Luke are to be credited, they were near relations, their families living within a moderate distance of each other, upon visiting terms; and John's father and mother not only well acquainted with Mary, who had paid them one visit at least at their own house, but also with her supposed miraculous conception of him, who was to be the future Messiah. Is it credible, that neither the father nor mother, being under no injunctions of secrecy, should never have said a syllable of this to their son John as he grew up; or that he, or any thing wearing the human form, after hearing of this wonderful personage, a relation too of his own, should never have had the curiosity to take a short journey to Nazareth, to see him?

You say, that without the two first chapters of St. Matthew's Gospel, it has in fact no commencement. But why may it not begin with, "In those days came John the Baptist preaching." Is this half as abrupt as the beginning of the first espistle of St. John? and does it not open at as fit a period as the other Gospels do? indeed at the same period? Do not these words shew that the preceding parts, as we now have them in our present copies, formed no part of the original Gospel? for if we read them in continuance, as they are written in those copies, they refer to the time when Joseph came out of Egypt with the young child Jesus and his mother, and came and dwelt at Nazareth;

and the Evangelist is made to say, "In those days came John the Baptist preaching," when according to the two first supposed chapters of St. Luke, John must have been then a young child himself, and did not come preaching till more than twenty years after.

I still consider the remarks I offered (p. 44) on the representations this writer makes relative to the fourteen generations, as furnishing not only an argument against their authenticity, but an argument which you have not been able to weaken in the least. A writer who takes upon him to state that just so many generations intervened between one event and another, the same number between that event and a second, and the very same number between the second and a third, is bound to be correct; otherwise his statement is both false and trifling. His conduct too is the more inexcusable, as his genealogy is falsified both by Kings and Chronicles, where you will find that the persons who ought to have been inserted, are not only particularly mentioned as distinguished personages, but the dates and lengths of their respective reigns, with some of the principal transactions which took place in them, are also expressly related, shewing demonstrably, that there was no colour for pretending that all the generations from David until the carrying away into Babylon were fourteen generations, as this writer has gravely informed us.

Nor would the arguments I have adduced for re-

jecting this account, be deemed by any intelligent deist to be such as should induce me to set aside three-fourths of the Scriptures: for I will venture to affirm, that there is not to be found in the whole compass of Scripture, any other account that is so expressly falsified, in its principal allegations, by other parts of Scripture, whilst it is at the same time totally unsupported by any.

You inform me, "that it is not proved that the gencalogy of Matthew is irreconcileable with that of Luke, for that they refer to different views of the Saviour's descent; that from his less remote ancestor by the supposed father, and that from the more remote by his mother." But I have only your word for this; for when I look into the supposed first chapter of St. Matthew, I find, supposing the author of the first seventeen verses and of the rest of the chapter to be the same person, that though he entitles it, The Book of the Generation of Jesus Christ, the Son of David, the Son of Abraham,—it does not prove him to be the son of either; nor does it give any account whatever of his generation or genealogy, but only that of Joseph, who according to the rest of the chapter was not his father. It is unquestionably, however, the genealogy of Joseph; and it traces his descent through the royal line of Jewish monarchs, from David to the overthrow of that dynasty, and from the last of those princes to Joseph himself.

In the third chapter of St. Luke we have another

genealogy, which professes upon the face of it to be also a genealogy of Joseph, and ascends from him to David, through a totally different line of intermediate ancestors, not one of whom is of the royal line of Jewish kings. You tell me that this is a descent by the mother:—but where are the proofs of it? The Evangelist contradicts it: for he expressly says that Joseph was the son of Heli, and Heli the son of Matthat, and so on, without saying a syllable about Jesus's mother. Why then are we, contrary to the express words of Scripture, without any authority whatever, to assume, that this, which stands upon the face of it, as the genealogy of Joseph, whose name is inserted in it for that purpose,—is the genealogy of Mary, whose name is not mentioned or alluded to in it at all?

It has been said, that a Trinitarian writer of the third or fourth century (who probably had no better reason to give) informed his readers two or three hundred years or more after the event took place, that some rabbi, nobody knows who, or where, or when, had called her the daughter of Heli. This has all the air of being an idle story, picked up probably at second or third hand, when it was manifestly too late for the parties to it to know any thing at all of the matter. But supposing any rabbi ever to have said so,—how came he, so long after the destruction of the Jewish nation, and the loss of all their genealogies and other public documents, to know so much more about the matter than the Christians? What probability is there,

that a Jew should trace out (if he could) the genealogy of the mother of one whom he considered to be a base impostor, and whose memory he would have been glad to consign to everlasting oblivion? And are we to believe all this to be truth itself, and upon such miserably weak foundations take it for granted, that the Evangelist's genealogy, though importing to be the genealogy of Joseph, whom he expressly names, is not his genealogy, but that of another person not mentioned nor even alluded to? Supposing it to have been the genealogy of Mary, and not that of Joseph,—what possible motive could there have been for omitting the name of Mary, whose genealogy it was, and inserting that of Joseph, whose genealogy it was not, instead of it?

I have assigned some reasons in my second Letter, p. 44—48, to which I shall add a few more in this, why I consider the two first chapters of St. Luke, as well as the two first of St. Matthew, to be interpolations. These constitute but a part of the number that might be easily adduced against their authenticity; and having no doubt of their being spurious, I should have none that the same hand, which added them to St. Luke's genuine Gospel, interpolated in the third chapter the words (ώς ενομίζετο) translated in the common version 'as was supposed,' if that be in reality their meaning, to prevent the genealogy from completely contradicting them. The chapter containing them gives us the genealogy of Joseph, whose genealogy, if he were only the supposed father of Jesus, it was of

no consequence for us to be acquainted with. Without them we are presented with the genealogy of Jesus himself, which, as tracing him up to David, and finally to God, and thus shewing him to be descended from those persons from whom it had been predicted that the Messiah should descend, it was of highest importance for us to be informed of.

The scope and design of St. Luke were evidently to give the real genealogy of Jesus, and not his supposed genealogy; and to trace his descent through Davidwhose son he afterwards in his Gospel calls him, and whose son all the Jews knew him predicted to be,up to Adam and to God, proving him to have been both the son of Adam, and the son of God. But if he was not the son of Joseph-of what use was it, to make either this genealogy, or that in the supposed first chapter of St. Matthew, a genealogy of Joseph, or to give it at all the appearance of being his genealogy? If the words ώς ενομιζετο were originally part of the text, and are rightly translated, 'as was supposed,' about which there is great diversity of opinion, (for they will also bear the construction, and so are translated by some, being 'as he was supposed' the son of Joseph, in opposition either to an idle opinion of the Jews mentioned John vii. 27, (that when Christ came no one would know whence he was,) or to the tenets of the Gnostics, who denied that he was come in the flesh, and maintained that he had only the appearance of a human body, being in reality an æon, or

emanation from the Supreme Being. And accordingly they who thus translate the words, understood the writer to mean, in opposition to such theories, that Jesus Christ really was, what he was supposed to be, the son of Joseph, and consequently a man): yet it would be most extraordinary, that any writer should give a supposed genealogy, when he was well acquainted with, and might just as easily have given, the true one. What was to have prevented him, if he knew that Jesus was not in reality the son of Joseph, but only supposed to have been so during his lifetime by the Jews, but was universally known by all Christians not to have been his son, but to have been the son of the Most High, by Mary without any human father, from satisfying his readers that he was the son of David through his mother, which he might at once have done, by saying that he was the son of Mary, who was the daughter of Heli: or if Heli adopted Joseph because he married his daughter, by saying so; -for without it the genealogy is that of Joseph only, and no one could possibly understand it to be the genealogy of Mary without an explanation, which we look for in vain in the subsequent parts of the history. Neither St. Luke, nor any other Scripture writer, gives such an explanation; and we are required to infer it from a ridiculous story told us by a writer of the third or fourth century of an unknown rabbi-having called her the daughter of Heli, which comes to us in nothing like the shape of authority or probability.

St. Luke wrote in Greek for the use of Greek Christians, most of whom lived at a distance from Judea: and many of them, being Gentiles, knew nothing of the genealogies, and very little of the manners and customs, of the Jews. These persons could never have conceived, without being told so, that the writer when he was tracing the genealogy of Jesus up to David, from whose loins it had been predicted he was to spring, Acts ii. 30, would do it through Joseph his father-in-law, from whose loins he did not spring: and through whom, as far as appears from this account, he could not spring from the loins of David, nor be his son; and wholly neglect to say, if it were the fact, that his mother was the descendant of David, and go up to him through her. If the Jewish custom was, as some have said, to trace their genealogies through the males only, it is plain that the custom must have been violated, according to your system, in this instance; for no genealogy of Jesus, if he was to descend from David through a female, could have been framed without falsehood, according to such custom; and to have proved him to be the son of David at all, the female ought to have been described, supposing her to have been so, as the daughter of Heli, who was a son of David, after which her husband, if such had been the fact, might have been called the adopted son of Heli; though this in reality would not have assisted the genealogy in the least ; -and afterwards it might have gone up from Heli. But there

is not a syllable of this nature to be found in any part of Scripture; besides which, in order to have traced his genealogy through the males according to the alleged custom, it ought to have been traced wholly through males from whom he did descend, and not through a male from whom he did not descend.

If our Lord was not the son of Joseph, neither the genealogy in the supposed first chapter of St. Matthew, nor that in the third chapter of St. Luke proves him, as both Gospels profess to do, to have been the son of David: but each of the genealogies clearly gives us the genealogy of Joseph, and the one as decidedly so as the other; yet they are irreconcileably at variance with each other, inasmuch as they go up through ancestors who are totally different persons, and descended from David in totally different lines, lines so completely distinguished from each other, that it is impossible to mistake the one for the other; the first being the Royal line, wholly consisting of Jewish kings, from David to the last reigning prince of his family, and the second being a line not containing one single king amongst the whole number: dissess used synd of dissip signed ods alode.

Under such circumstances, we must do as we are obliged to do in all other cases of a similar description, and make our election between them, as both cannot be true; in doing which, I should conceive there could be no hesitation in giving the preference to the undisputed part of St. Luke's Gospel, over the

disputed part of St. Matthew's, the latter containing a genealogy we can prove to be defective, accompanied by remarks about the number of generations, which we know to be untrue, and followed by an account in the same chapter which entirely contradicts it.

As to the discrepancies between the two ancient histories of Kings and Chronicles, if they vary in such manner as to amount to contradictions, it is obvious that both cannot be believed, and that we must, in a similar manner, endeavour to ascertain which of the two appears upon the whole to be most worthy of credit, and make our election.

You say "that it was of importance to shew to the Jews, that our Lord was, according to their authorized records, descended from David, being legally acknowledged the son of Joseph, and that Mary, of whom he was born, was known to be of the family." I, on the other hand contend, that it was not only of importance, but absolutely necessary, to shew both to the Jews and Gentiles, that he was, in point of fact, descended from David, and not merely acknowledged upon paper, or parchment, to be the son of a descendant of David, though he was in reality no more his son, than he was the son of Herod, or Augustus, according to your hypothesis. If, indeed, he was not the son of Joseph, as you contend, the records must have been false, for they plainly aver that he was, and in that case it would be of very little consequence what they legally acknowledged.

In addition to this, as they do not shew him to have been the son of David in any other way than as the son of Joseph, if this was false, they could not shew to the Jews that our Lord was descended from David at all, except through the medium of a direct forgery, or some other unworthy artifice. Of his mother, not a word is said in the genealogy in the third chapter of St. Luke, nor is it pretended in that given in the supposed first chapter of St. Matthew, that she was the daughter of David, or of any descendant of David; therefore these records could not shew to the Jews that he was descended from David through her. If the custom rendered it necessary that the descent should be traced through the males, and the name of Joseph was inserted on this account, it was a palpable fraud upon the custom, and calculated to make the public believe what was not true. If Joseph was only the adopted son of Heli, and his name was inserted for that reason, the genealogy fails in shewing Christ to be any thing more than the son of David by adoption, and does not prove him to have been of the fruit of his loins. If this were the case, and one of David's descendants had adopted Herod, he also would have been a son of David. If Joseph's name was inserted only because he was the husband of Mary, and not because he was the father of Jesus, not only would the alleged custom have been violated; but as the records did not shew, either that Mary was the daughter of Jacob, in the supposed first chapter of St. Matthew,

or the daughter of Heli, in the third chapter of St. Luke; and she must have been the daughter of both, if they had, and both records had been true; saying nothing of the absurdity of supposing, that there were two different records, or registers, of one and the same person, they could not have shewn to the Jews, that Jesus was descended from David in any way.

A weaker hypothesis than this was never invented: I entirely exculpate you, my friend, from having had any concern in its fabrication, but regret that you should have given countenance to it, probably because it came down to you under the sanction of respectable names, without submitting it to a proper examination. Did it never occur to you, that the public records were in the hands of the Pharisees, or at least of the ruling authorities for the time being; and that it was not in the power, either of the father or mother of Jesus, persons in a low condition, to make what entries in them they thought proper? If it had been, any other person might have done the like, and consequently such records would have been of no authority whatever,

I perceive, moreover, that you have, seemingly without being sensible of it, shifted your terms upon me, and have for this purpose translated &s ενομιζετο, instead of 'as was supposed,' "as was legally acknowledged," meaning as was acknowledged in law, or as was enrolled. I have no fault to find with this translation, which I know the original will bear; but if

there was such an entry or enrolment upon record, and the evangelist intended to tell us so, I should have no doubt that the record was true, and that it meant that he was the son of Joseph. If any historian writing the life of Gustavus Adolphus King of Sweden, had said, 'Now Gustavus Adolphus King of Sweden began to be about thirty years of age, being, as was legally acknowledged,' or 'as was enrolled,' or 'as appeared by the register,' using either of those phrases, the son of Charles King of Sweden,' would any one have supposed for a moment, that the historian designed to convey any other meaning, than that Gustavus Adolphus was the son of Charles King of Sweden, and that he was legally acknowledged to be so, or that it was so enrolled, or that it so appeared by the register, according to the phrase made use of? Would any one in his senses imagine, that the historian knew all the while that he was not the son of Charles King of Sweden; and, what is still more extraordinary, expected that his readers would understand from these words, which mean that he was, that in fact he was not? It is only when the doctrine of the Trinity is the subject, that such wild fancies take possession of men's minds. Upon any other occasion, the absurdity would appear so glaring, that if proposed to them for their assent, they would consider it an insult upon their understandings. Besides, if the words as evopulero will bear the translation you have given of them, as well as that of the common

version, "as was supposed," which no doubt they will, the argument drawn from the insertion of the words "as was supposed" in this place, falls at once, it being very uncertain whether the original is to be understood in that sense, or another.

With regard to Mary, of whom he was born, being known to be one of the family, I should be glad to be informed what proof there is of it, and when, and by whom, she was ever known to be so. I believe it will turn out that there is nothing but the story of the Rabbi to countenance it. The Scriptures contain no such assertion. On the contrary, if the supposed first chapter of St. Luke were of any authority, it would be much more likely that she was of the family of Aaron, than of the family of David; for we are told that "Zachariah's wife was of the daughters of Aaron," and that "her name was Elizabeth" (Luke i. 5); and, ver. 36, the Angel is represented as informing Mary that her cousin Elizabeth had conceived a son in her old age. But in truth there is no evidence either way. Joseph may, or he may not, have married a woman of his own tribe. He may, or he may not, have married a woman of his own family. The probability is that he did not: and the 36th verse of this spurious chapter (if the least credit were due to any thing contained in it) would, as far as it goes, shew, or at least render it highly probable, that he did not.

You remark, "that the miraculous conception not being referred to as often as we might expect, is no

more than might be said of many other things in our Lord's history,—the resurrection of Lazarus, for example; but that the miraculous conception is mentioned by the earliest Christians, as of the greatest notoriety." Here I must remind you, that my objection is, that neither the miraculous conception, nor any one of the numerous miraculous events related in the four disputed chapters, is referred to at ALL in any other part of Scripture whatever, and that the omission of a single miracle, by writers who had recorded others of the same kind, which required equal power, and proved the same thing, is not like the omission of an entire branch of our Lord's history, comprising many great and extraordinary miracles, proving, if true, a most important doctrine relating to his nature and character, which is not proved, mentioned, nor as much as alluded to, in any other part of Scripture, either by any other Scripture writer, or even by either of the two evangelists to whom it has been ascribed in any subsequent part of their Gospels, or by the last of them in any part of the book of Acts. Six out of eight of the Scripture writers, in fact, pass over the whole in profound silence, as if (which I have no doubt was the case, for it cannot otherwise be accounted for upon any rational principle,) they had never heard one syllable about it; and the two who are said to have mentioned it, in the disputed chapters now in question, never refer to, or take the least notice of it afterwards.

Were not St. Peter, St. James, St. John, St. Jude, St. Paul, and St. Mark, amongst the earliest, and most eminent Christians? And is it mentioned by any one of them at all, much less as a matter of the greatest notoriety? Was not St. Clement, the friend and companion of St. Paul, one of the earliest Christian writers? Has not his Epistle to the Corinthians come down to us in an entire state? And is there one word in it about the miraculous conception from the beginning to the end?

You appear to me to have misapprehended me, when you say, "That men did not afterwards believe in Christ on account of these things, is very true; but the same may be said of the most striking miracles wrought by Christ himself; so that John said, though he had wrought so many miracles among them, yet believed they not on him." I was not speaking only, or principally, of those who did not believe, but of those who did, and stated (p. 47) that not one person believed him to be the Messiah, when he afterwards came forward in that character, on account of any of these wonderful transactions, not even his own brothers, who, like many of their own countrymen, did not believe in him after he had begun to perform miracles as such (John vii. 5); but all who did believe are represented as having done so on account of the miracles which he wrought in his own person, to which alone he himself appealed, and never once to a single occurrence related in these spurious chapters;

nor were any of them, mirabile dictu, ever appealed to as proofs of his mission by any of his Apostles. Now what answer is given, or attempted to be given, to this? Nothing more or less than that "thirty years had elapsed from the time these wonders were performed, to that of our Lord's public appearance, and that perhaps most of those who were impressed by them were dead."

Is it possible, that any one in the sober exercise of his understanding can imagine, that events so extraordinary, and made so public, as the following, which appear to have troubled the then sovereign of the country, and all Jerusalem with him, should have been forgotten in the short space of thirty years, namely, the appearance of a company of learned strangers at Jerusalem inquiring for a child who had been born King of the Jews, and declaring publicly that they had seen his star in the east, and were come to worship him; the assembling of a council of all the Chief Priests and Scribes by Royal authority, to inquire where this wonderful child was to be born; the sending of the strangers to Bethlehem; the star going before them till it stood over the place where the infant was; their finding him, and making offerings to him, of gold, frankincense and myrrh, which, as they made no secret, either of their visit, or the object of it, must, in a strange place, particularly at an inn crowded with guests, have been known to considerable numbers of people, and must of course have ex-

cited the attention, and awakened the curiosity, of the whole town and neighbourhood; also the appearance first of an angel, and afterwards of a multitude of the Heavenly Host, to the shepherds near Bethlehem, announcing the birth of their Messiah; their entering the town, finding the child at the inn, and publishing what they had seen and heard to every one; his public annunciation in the Temple by Simeon, to whom it had been miraculously revealed; his public acknowledgement by Anna the prophetess at the same time and place, who spoke of him as the Messiah to all who looked for redemption in Jerusalem; and the slaughter of the innocents, supposing that not more than ten or a dozen suffered;—is it to be believed; that in thirty years all these things could have passed clean out of the memories of most of those persons who lived to the end of that period? On the contrary, all who had seen and heard of them would be likely to have made them the subjects of frequent conversation with their friends and children, whilst a considerable proportion of them must have been still living at the end of that time; for such of them as did not exceed twenty years of age when they happened, could not have been more than fifty when our Lord made his public appearance as the Messiah. Besides, the child during the whole period of his advancement to manhood, after such signal miracles to announce his entrance into the world, such public and repeated declarations of him as the Messiah, must have had the

eyes of the whole nation fixed upon him, as a great and extraordinary personage, upon whom the destinies of his country were to depend. It was impossible that he could ever after have been lost sight of. He must have been constantly talked of as the person who was to make his appearance in that high and dignified character, to which all his countrymen were looking forward with the most anxious expectation; and when he did so appear, and began to perform miracles in attestation of his Divine mission, these extraordinary occurrences at his birth would have been in every one's mouth, and have been mentioned and insisted upon again and again, especially in answer to those who denied his claim, because he did not happen to be such a Messiah as they expected.

But if others who had witnessed or heard of the wonderful transactions we have just been alluding to, were dead at the time our Lord first made his appearance as the Messiah, was not Mary his mother then living? and was it not natural, as they were no secrets, for her to have talked of them repeatedly in her family, to Jesus himself, and to his brothers and sisters, as they were growing up? and if she did, why should we suppose that they disbelieved her? If there really had been such transactions, so notorious and public as they are represented to have been, can we account for Nicodemus, who appears to have been a man of consideration, and a public character among the Jews, a man of letters, and a member of their council, hav-

ing been so easily silenced, on his intimating to the Pharisees that Jesus ought to be heard, in order to determine whether he was the Christ, by their bidding him search and look, for that out of Galilee arose no prophet? Would it not have been most easy for him to have said, if it had been so, 'That is no answer, for Jesus was born at Bethlehem, where, according to your construction of the Prophets, the Messiah ought to have been born.' All these considerations, added to the entire silence of Matthew and Luke themselves in all the subsequent parts of their respective gospels, and of the rest of the Evangelists, and all the other Scripture writers, must, one should think, lead inevitably to the conclusion, that the supposed facts detailed in these disputed chapters had in reality no existence.

I leave it to the advocates for the genuineness of the chapters in question, to reconcile the different accounts they give of these transactions; for in the two supposed first chapters of St. Matthew, we are informed that the wise men having made their offerings, being warned of God not to return to Herod, departed into their own country another way; that when they were departed, an angel appeared to Joseph in a dream, commanding him to arise, and take the young child and his mother, and flee into Egypt, because Herod would seek the young child to destroy him; that he thereupon arose, and took the child and his mother by night, and departed into Egypt; and

that Herod finding that he was deceived by the wise men, sent and slew all the male children in Bethlehem under two years old. In the two supposed first chapters of St. Luke, we have not a word of this; but on the contrary are informed, that after waiting very tranquilly for forty-one days, that is, until the days of Mary's purification were completed, they brought him without the least scruple or alarm, as if they had never heard that he was in the least danger, to the very place, of all others, where Herod his great enemy, who sought to destroy him, was, that is, to Jerusalem, for the purpose of presenting him to the Lord in the Temple, the most public place there, and in the most public manner, and openly offering a sacrifice for him; upon which occasion he was immediately recognised, without any reserve or concealment, by Simeon and Anna, and made the subject of general conversation; and that when they had performed all things according to law upon this occasion, Herod with his myrmidons being all the while upon the very spot, they went very quietly not into Egypt, but back into Galilee, to their own city Nazareth, where it does not appear by the two supposed first chapters of Matthew, that Joseph or Mary had ever been before, but on the contrary, that on their return from Egypt, the former being warned of God, they turned aside into the parts of Galilee, and came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth, not because it was their own city, the place of their former residence, but that a prophecy might be

fulfilled, that he should be called a Nazarene. Nor can it be said, as has been pretended, that these contradictory accounts relate to different times; for both are fixed to the time of our Lord's birth, with a particularity that renders it impossible to be mistaken, the supposed second chapter of St. Matthew saying, "Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold there came wise men from the East, to Jerusalem," &c.; whilst the supposed second chapter of St. Luke relates his being born at Bethlehem, and laid in a manger, where he was found by the shepherds who had seen the angels, by one of whom they were informed of it.

Having made these remarks upon some of the contradictions and inconsistencies between the supposed two first chapters of St. Matthew, and the supposed two first chapters of St. Luke, I shall now offer you a few observations upon a single specimen of the matters related in the latter,\* from which it appears to me to be demonstrable, that they never could have proceeded from the pen of the Evangelist, or of any person writing true history, or in the least acquainted,

<sup>\*</sup> I could easily have selected more, had it been necessary. If, for example, after having calculated from what is laid down Luke iii. 1, which is undisputed, in what year of the reign of Augustus our Lord was born, you will ascertain, and compare with it, the several years of that Emperor's reign, in which Herod and his successor Archelaus died, in which Cyrenius was governor of Syria, and in which Judea was reduced to the state of a Roman province so as to be taxed by the Romans like the rest of their provinces, which it was not whilst it was under its own Kings or Princes, you will soon find that you have raised objections to the authenticity and credit of the statements contained in the second chapter of the most serious and formidable nature.

either with the facts, or with the nature of the subjects, he professes to give an account of. It is said in the supposed second chapter of St. Luke, that "there went out a decree from Cæsar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed, and that all went to be taxed, every one into his own city, and that Joseph also went up from Galilee out of the city of Nazareth, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David, to be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child." Now in the first place it is observable, that the statement is, that all went to be taxed, every one into his own city, but that Joseph went out of HIS own city, in which he dwelt, unto Bethlehem, which was not his own city, but a city where one of his remote ancestors, more than seven hundred years before, had lived during a part, and that the shortest and least conspicuous and celebrated part, of his life. Let it be supposed, however, to have been the intention of this writer, as it would seem to have been, and indeed must have been, to render him at all consistent, to have represented the meaning of the decree to have been, that each should go up to be taxed to the city where one of his remote ancestors, the founder of his family, had been born, and lived, though he had never lived there himself.

The absurdity of such a scheme is glaring, and I will venture to say, without the slightest hesitation, that it was utterly impossible that it should ever have been carried into effect, even if the Roman government (which under Augustus was not composed either

of fools or madmen, could have thought of any measure so preposterous. What could be more absurd or impolitic, and more likely to defeat its own ends, than to compel people, and especially the lower sort of people, who are always the most numerous, to travel from the places where they resided, to other and frequently distant places, in order to pay a small annual tax, which might with more ease, and greater certainty, have been collected from them in the places where they respectively dwelt, to compel them to spend perhaps five times the amount of the tax in travelling: to expend possibly a pound or more, to pay probably the didrachin, value fifteen pence? Many of the common people might have been expected to spend all their money in travelling, and to have nothing left to pay the tax when they arrived at the places of their destination. Multitudes, to whom the payment of any poll-tax would be distressing, as it has always proved in every country where it has been tried, would, if they could have raised the tribute money itself, have been utterly incapable of raising a fund for the travelling expenses of themselves and their wives; and the compelling them to go in order to pay the tax to the city where the family from which they had sprung was originally settled, would have been the very acine of folly, as this would have imposed the further difficulty of finding out, and proving, if necessary, where it was; and how could the tax-gatherers have investigated all

this, and ascertained that the tax was paid in the right place? How could the tax-gatherers at Bethlehem, for instance, have known what members of families which had hundreds of years before been settled there. were then living at Jerusalem, or other places more distant, and that they had all made their appearance at Bethlehem to pay the tax? Supposing it to have been in their power to have done all this, why should such unnecessary trouble have been imposed upon them, and both trouble and expense, together with great loss of time, upon the unfortunate payers of the tax? What would it have signified to the government, where the tax was paid, provided it was paid at all? and would they have resorted to such a ridiculous and oppressive mode of payment, as every one must see at a glance, would have rendered it in a great measure abortive?

Let us suppose a poll-tax of half a crown to be imposed in this kingdom, and such a plan to be resorted to in order to realize it. Would all the power of the country be able to send the population of London, or Edinburgh, upon their travels? And yet upon the same principle, which is supposed to have rendered it necessary for Joseph to travel to Bethlehem, the greater part of them would be obliged to go, and to take their wives with them too, though in the most advanced stage of pregnancy. Nor would this be one hundredth part of the evil; for we should have people travelling

from York to Cornwall, and from Cornwall to York, from England to Scotland and Ireland, and from those parts of the kingdom to England. In short, the whole country would be in a state of universal commotion, and the roads full of travellers, most of them without adequate means of conveyance; and this to be repeated every year. What statesman or magistrate, indeed what person of common sense, would not laugh at such a scheme if it were proposed, and predict with perfect certainty, that it would prove an abortion in the first instance?

Upon the supposition of its having been universal, as it is here represented, at least in the common version, throughout all the world, meaning all the provinces of the Roman empire; it would have been obligatory upon all the Jews settled in Europe, Asia and Africa, to have travelled into Palestine to pay their tax, and upon the people of the various other nations of which the Roman empire was then composed, whose families had been comfortably and quietly settled, some of them perhaps for ages, in the city of Rome, or in other cities of the empire, at a distance from the provinces formerly inhabited by their forefathers, to have travelled back to the countries of their respective ancestors, to pay their several proportions of the same miserable tax, which might, with so much more advantage, both to government and people, have been collected from them at home. In short, the whole empire must have been in a state of confusion, if not of complete anarchy\*.

When Joseph arrived at Bethlehem, it does not appear that he knew a single person there. The presumption is, that he did not, for he was not received into the house of any relation, friend or acquaintance; but was obliged to take refuge at an inn, where there was not room for him, and the only accommodation he could obtain, is represented to have been in a stable; the writer not reflecting, that the same universal travelling, which made the inn overflow with guests, would fill the stable also with their horses, and that if there was not one person of common humanity among them, who would give up his bed to a lying-inwoman, the wife of a descendant of one of their most ancient and renowned kings; it is not very likely that they would have accommodated her, by consenting to the removal of their horses from the stable; nor must we imagine, if Joseph had had a single relation or acquaintance in the place, that he could not have been accommodated under such trying circumstances with some vacant apartment in the town; since, though the general travelling then taking place, would natu-

<sup>\*</sup> Some have translated απογραφεσθαι, to be enrolled or registered, instead of to be taxed; but an attempt to compel such multitudes to set out upon their travels, that they might be enrolled or registered in distant places where their remote ancestors happened to live, if they could have discovered where such places were, would have been equally ridiculous, preposterous and impracticable.

rally crowd the inns, it would make but little difference as to private houses; for the same cause that brought some from other places to Bethlehem, would take away others who lived at Bethlehem, from thence to other places. But it must be needless to enlarge further upon such an account as this, or to do more than to appeal to the candid consideration of every man of understanding, whether he can think it possible, that it ever proceeded from St. Luke, who has written so correctly, so consistently, and so well, in the undisputed parts of his history.

You cite the passage John xii. 37-41 to prove that Christ was believed by John, to be the Lord of Hosts according to your view of the commencement of his Gospel, that is, I apprehend, the Trinitarian view of him as the second person in the Trinity, coequal, and co-eternal, with the Father. But if John had believed this stupendous doctrine, would he not have told us so in some part or other of his Gospel, he being one of those who were specially commissioned to declare the whole counsel of God to mankind, to preach the Gospel, not a part of it only, to every creature? Would he have permitted a most important branch of Christianity, upon the belief of which the salvation of mankind is made to depend, to be picked up, and made out, by mere inference and implication, by referring to the writings of one of the prophets, which are referred to, not for that, but for another and different purpose altogether?

Let us consider what the design of the Apostle was, in quoting the passage in question, taking it as it now stands. Was it to prove that Christ was the Lord of Hosts? No such thing; but to account for the unbelief of the Jews by shewing that it had been before predicted by the prophet Isaiah, and then took place for the fulfilment of that prophecy. I should not think it at all probable, therefore, that he designed that we should turn to the passage in Isaiah, and infer from it, that which he says nothing about in his Gospel, though it would have been of the utmost importance if true, namely, that Christ is the Lord of Hosts. For that reason the interpretation of this passage which has been proposed by Grotius, Dr. Clarke, and the Unitarians, seems to me to be much preferable to that of the Trinitarians, namely, that when John says, ver. 41, "These things said Esaias when he saw his glory, and spake of him," he meant to represent that Esaias being a prophet foresaw the glory of Christ, as Abraham, it is said, John viii. 56, saw his day, that is, foresaw it in prophetic vision many centuries before its actual arrival.

It appears that the Apostle John, in the passage in question, quotes two different parts of the prophet Isaiah, namely, that in the 53d chapter which he refers to first, and that in the sixth chapter which he cites afterwards; and then proceeds, "These things said Esaias, when he saw his glory and spake of him."

Now it is quite plain, that the first of the things

which Esaias is represented to have said when he saw his glory, and spake of him, is that which is to be found in the 53d chapter of Isaiah, which relates wholly to what Christ should be after his birth, representing that he should grow up before him, which must mean another, and that other, Jehovah the Father, as a tender plant, &c.; that he was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, &c.; that Jehovah had laid on him the iniquity of us all, distinguishing him thus from Jehovah throughout, and representing Jehovah as the actor, and Christ as the sufferer; yet it pleased Jehovah to bruise him, &c. After this, comes the prophecy of his glory, ver. 12, "Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong." But it is evident, that this glory was not in existence, but only in prospect, when Isaiah wrote; and therefore when John says, that Esaias saw it, he must have meant that he foresaw it as a prophet, and this was the glory of Christ, was his glory, as the Apostle expresses it.

I have no doubt however in my own mind, though I cannot expect you to go along with me, that the 39th and 40th verses are an interpolation, a marginal gloss probably, which has found its way, as many have done in different MSS., into the text, and has been rather clumsily put into the wrong place; for after quoting the 53d chapter of Isaiah, the Apostle is made to say, "Therefore they could not believe, because that Esaias said again;" and then instead of

stating any thing that Isaiah said afterwards, the Apostle is made to quote something he had said long before, in the sixth chapter, in which chapter there is not a single allusion made to the name, person, character, or office of the Messiah, or Christ, or to any thing he was to do in that or any other character; and the making of the heart of the Jewish people fat, their ears heavy, and shutting their eyes, was to last no longer than "till the cities should be wasted without inhabitant, and the houses without man, and the land should be utterly desolate, and Jehovah should have removed man far away, and there should be a great forsaking in the midst of the land," that is, till the Babylonish captivity, when we know that all these events were fully accomplished, after which we know also, that there was a return as predicted in the thirteenth verse of the same chapter, and the cities were re-peopled, and the land in our Saviour's time, full of inhabitants; from which it is manifest, that the prediction could not refer to the blindness or unbelief of the Jews at the time of our Lord's appearance; consequently their not believing them, could be no fulfilment of that which, according to the sixth chapter of Isaiah, was to terminate ages before, for which reason the passage was not fit to be quoted, and introduced where it is. But some transcriber or proprietor of a MS. probably seeing an allusion to one prophecy of Isaiah which in point of fact did allude to our Saviour's appearance, sufferings, and exaltation, and fancying, though he was mistaken, that he had found another in the same prophet, transcribed it into the margin, where being found by a subsequent copyist, it was, as we know many such were, inserted in the text, and carelessly put into the wrong place, where it disturbs the sense of the whole, and introduces the absurdity of supposing that the Apostle having used the word 'saw,' only once, intended to use it in two different senses at one and the same time, that is, in the sense of 'saw,' and 'foresaw.'

I admit that this interpolation must have taken place before the writing of any now existing MS.; but having proofs from the present state of many of the MSS. still extant, that alterations have been made in the text, sometimes negligently, and at others intentionally in favour of the then prevailing doctrines, which we have, even at this late period of time, been able to detect, and have in consequence repudiated them, why are we to suppose, that during the three centuries which intervened between the writing of the earliest of them, and the death of the Apostles, there were not some made in the earlier, and now non-existing MSS., which having been copied into the succeeding ones, which are at present extant, we have no means now, by MSS. alone, to prove them to be such, and therefore cannot absolutely strike them out, though an attentive examination will shew us, that there is intrinsic evidence sufficient to enable us to determine what they are, or at least to convince us

that we are not entitled to place any reliance upon them as authorities?

It must not be omitted however, that eleven of the MSS, and ancient versions exhibit various readings, which destroy the Trinitarian construction of the passage entirely. Of these the Leicester MS., the Copt. Sahid. Syr. Hierosl. Syr. p. et rec. in m. and Vulg. versions, omit the word autou, and substitute the words 700 O500, and the Cambr. MS. which was Beza's. and is of the highest antiquity, and Gale's MS., immediately before autov insert tov Osov; whilst the Latin version of the Cambr. MS. reads Dei sui, which probably induced Dr. Harwood to give us this text, Tavτα δε ειπεν Εσαιας ότε ειδε την δοξαν του Θεου και ελαλησε περι αυτου, that is, These things said Esaias when he saw the glory of God, and spake of him; but this would not remove the objection, even if there were more MSS. in support of it, that the Apostle must still be supposed to have made use of the same word in two different senses at one and the same time, all that is referred to in the 53d chapter relating to events that were to take place relative to the Messiah, after his birth, and consequently could only have been foreseen; for which reason there would still be intrinsic evidence for considering the last quotation from Isaiah to be an interpolation.

After this investigation, let me ask you, whether such an obscure reference as this, made, if in fact made at all, for a totally different purpose, and surrounded as it is with doubtful and suspicious circumstances, can, with the least propriety, be dignified with the name of a proof. But supposing that such an amazing doctrine could be set up on a mere inference, it might be rebutted, and thrown down again immediately, by a much clearer and stronger inference in the first chapter of the Hebrews, where Christ is declared to be the son of that God who spake to the fathers by the prophets; and consequently the Lord of Hosts, whose glory the prophet Isaiah saw, and who spake by him to the Jews, commanding him to tell them to hear, but understand not, and see, but perceive not, &c., Isaiah vi. 9, was the Father of Christ, and not Christ himself.

You tell me "that the prophecy in Isaiah vii. 14, that a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel, which I have remarked upon, page 48, is not, as I supposed, misapplied; for that the name Immanuel signifies, as the use the prophet makes of it shews, God with us, to save us; and that Jesus signifies the same thing, for it does not mean simply Saviour, but Jehovah the Saviour." This is any thing but an answer; for I still maintain, that a prophecy that a virgin shall call her son Immanuel, is not fulfilled by a virgin calling her son Jesus, even if they meant the same thing. We have other names in common use, which mean the very same thing, as Gabriel and Ezekiel for instance, both of which mean the strength of God; but if a woman

were commanded to call her son Gabriel, we should not think she had obeyed the command, if she called him Ezekiel. According to this curious interpretation, the prophecy would have been equally fulfilled, if the supposed virgin had called her son Hoshaiah, or Isaiali, or even Eliphalet. But I deny that the two words mean the same thing. Immanuel means simply God with us. For whatever purpose God is to be with us upon a particular occasion, does not alter the meaning of the word itself. God may be with us either to save, or to comfort, or to bless, or to instruct us; but for which ever of these purposes he deigns to favour us with his special presence, the meaning of the word Immanuel remains the same, and it does not denote the purpose for which God is with us. Taking Jesus to mean Jehovah the Saviour, it means that only, and not that Jehovah the Saviour is with us, or even that he is to save us. Neither the names, nor the meanings of them, therefore, are the same, and saturation level

Having shewn, page 136, that the giving of the name Jehoshua, supposing him to have been a type of Christ, not proving him to have been Jehovah, the giving it to Christ the antitype, did not advance us a step in the proof that the latter was Jehovah, I should not have entered upon the subject again, if it had not been for your stating, "that Hoshea, the original name of the celebrated successor of Moses, signifies Saviour, but that when God selected him to become

a type of Christ, and a distinguished instrument in the hand of God to save Israel, he added a part of the name Jehovah, to make it Jehoshua, which was contracted into Joshua, the name from which Jesus comes; and that this name, which is equivalent to Immanuel, has superseded the latter, is not wonderful." But having read this, I naturally turned to the passage, Numb. xiii. 16, where the name Jehoshua is given to Joshua, to see whether it informs us, that this name was in fact given to Joshua, when God selected him to become a type of Christ, and a distinguished instrument to save Israel; or states that Joshua was selected to become a type of Christ at all; and was much surprised to find, that you had not been more careful to secure your ground, before you made the assertion; for there is not a word to be found in it, denoting that Joshua was selected to become a type of Christ at all, much less that the name was given to him when he was so selected for that purpose; nor does it even appear to have been given to him when he was selected to become a distinguished instrument in the hand of God to save Israel: but on the contrary it is stated, that it was given to him when he was selected to be a spy in conjunction with eleven others. In that character he could not be a type of Christ, and it does not appear that he was invested with any other upon that occasion. It is singular, likewise, upon your supposition, that instead of saving Israel, the object of the expedition failed,

and they not only derived no benefit from it, but it proved the occasion of their being sent back to wander in the wilderness, till all their men of war, except Joshua himself and one more, perished there.

You urge, "that the Jewish phrase of calling a person by a particular name, does not necessarily imply, that he should actually be spoken of, or to, by that as a common appellation; for that otherwise Christ must have been called by a host of names, e. g. Wonderful, Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace, Jehoval our Righteousness, the Branch, &c., and that all that was intended was, that he should be considered as all that was included in the name Immanuel, that in the same way, I may observe, that the land of Judea was never actually called Hephsibah, nor Beulah." I answer, that if you had proved, that it had been predicted that our blessed Lord was to be called by all these names, and many more, it would have amounted to nothing for the present purpose, inasmuch as saying generally that a great, wise, and illustrious prince shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, and the like, or that the city of Jerusalem shall be called Hephsibah, meaning my delight, or a country Beulah, a Married Land, that is, married to its cultivators, and saying that a child about to be born, shall be called by his father or mother George, or Charles, are manifestly totally different things, the latter so evidently pointing to the name which his parents should give him, as his appropriate appellation, that it would be merely wasting words to offer to prove it. To shew that what was meant by it, was perfectly well understood, even according to these writers themselves, they inform us, that when our Lord's parents were commanded by the Angel to call his name Jesus, they instantly complied, and did not call him Joshua, or Immanuel, or any other name, which by a very difficult and strained construction, might be supposed to mean something like it.

As to the city of Jerusalem, never having been actually called Hephsibah, nor the land of Judea, Beulah, that has not happened, whether the prediction is to be understood literally or not, for the best of all reasons, namely, that the time when it is predicted that they shall be so called, has not yet arrived. See Isaiah, chapter lxii, where any one who chooses to consult the passage relating to it, will perceive at the first glance, that they are not to receive those names, till the final restoration of the Jews to the land of their fathers; for it is not to happen "till the Gentiles shall have seen the righteousness of Jerusalem, and all the kings its glory, till it shall no more be termed forsaken, nor its land any more be termed desolate; when its corn shall no more be given to be meat for its enemies, nor shall the sons of the stranger drink its wine; but they that have gathered it, shall eat it and praise the Lord, and they that have brought it together, shall drink it, in the courts of

his holiness." But is not Jerusalem at this very moment forsaken? Is not her land at this moment termed desolate? Is not its corn still given to be meat for its enemies? Do they that have gathered it, eat it and praise the Lord? or do they that have brought it together, drink it in the courts of his holiness? If you had maturely considered the nature of the prophecy, my dear Sir, I am fully persuaded you would never have produced this as an argument.

In reply to the arguments adduced in my former Letter, page 49, to shew that the birth of the Messiah ages after, could not be a sign of a deliverance to be wrought almost immediately; your words are: "It was not intended, as you seem to suppose, to give a sign to the King. He had from secret infidelity, refused to accept the offer God made him, of having any sign he chose wrought for him, and now Jehovah turns from the King, and the unbelieving part of the people, to the pious Israelites who trembled for their invaded country, more from religion, than from nationality, and their faith he cheers by that which had always the most powerful effect on a genuine Israelite, a new promise of the Messiah; and they knew the nation was kept distinct, and Palestine secured to them, because their Messiah was to take our nature. It is supposed by some, that the Prophet was commanded to take Shear Jashub his son with him, in order to turn to him, and say, Before this child shall know to refuse the evil, and choose the

good, the land thou dreadest shall be deprived of both her kings; that is, Syria and Israel are so far from being destined to the Empire they seek over Judah, that they are both to become provinces of the victorious Assyria. I do not however doubt, that God speaks of the child to be born of the Virgin, as the word is most properly rendered; and the reasoning is, before the same length of time as shall elapse from the conception of that Virgin, to her child's being able to refuse the evil and choose the good, that is, before he shall be as old as Shear Jashub was then. perhaps three years, the lands in question shall be conquered by the Assyrians, which accordingly happened. That the Prophet meant the Messiah, and no child immediately to be born, is evident from his afterwards calling Judea Immanuel's land."

I am sorry to be obliged to observe, that these are not only assertions without proof, but that they are completely contradicted by the prophecy itself, to which I must now call your attention. How does it appear that it was not intended to give a sign to the King; and where is it said, that Jehovah turned from him, and the unbelieving part of the people, to the pious Israelites? Is it not clear from the 13th verse, "Hear ye now, O house of David. Is it a small thing for you to weary man, but will ye weary my God also?" that Isaiah was continuing his address to the very same persons, who had wearied him and his God too, to the house of David, including the King

himself, and not turning from them to certain other supposed pious Israelites, of whom the Prophet does not say a word? Is it not equally manifest from the 16th and 17th verses, that the King himself, as the head of the house of David, was the person principally addressed upon this occasion, the Prophet proceeding to say, in the former of these verses, "for before the child shall know to refuse the evil, and choose the good, the land that thou abhorrest shall be forsaken of both her kings; and in the latter, the Lord shall bring upon thee, and upon thy people, and upon thy father's house, days that have not come from the day that Ephraim departed from Judah, even the king of Assyria?" The rest of your remarks which depend upon these, are equally fanciful, and imagi-We are still to learn, that this was a new, or any promise of the Messiah, or that the pious Israelites knew that Palestine was to be secured to them because their Messiah was to take our nature, not one syllable of which appears in the prophecy, and which was not the fact; for instead of being secured to them on that, or any other account, it was more than once successfully invaded, and all but the city of Jerusalem taken, previous to the Babylonish captivity, and at that memorable epoch, the city itself, together with the rest of the country, was taken from them, and they were carried away captives into a foreign land.

The speculation you refer to, that Shear Jashub, the

Prophet's son, is the child alluded to in the 16th verse is answered by reading that, and the two preceding verses; from which it is manifest, that the very same child, a child not then born, is spoken of in all three; for in the 14th verse it was predicted, that a young woman should bear a son; in the 15th verse, that he should eat butter and honey, and why, that he might know to refuse the evil and choose the good; and in the 16th, that before the child should know to refuse the evil and choose the good, which, as had just before been mentioned, he was to eat butter and honey to acquire the knowledge of, the land that Ahaz abhorred should be forsaken of both her kings.

But your own speculation, that God speaks of the child to be born of the virgin, and that the meaning is, that before the same length of time as shall elapse from the conception of that virgin to her child's being able to refuse the evil and choose the good, that is, before he shall be as old as Shear Jashub was then, the land that thou dreadest shall be conquered by the Assyrian, is equally untenable; for in the first place, there is no allusion made either to Shear Jashub, or to his age; secondly, it is not said, that before the same length of time as shall elapse from the conception of the virgin to her child's being able to refuse the evil and choose the good, that is, before he should be as old as Shear Jashub was then, the land should be forsaken, which is a mere arbitrary gloss, without any foundation for it in the text, which says expressly,

that it should happen before that child should know to refuse the evil and choose the good, whether he should know it before or after he should be as old as Shear Jashub, indeed without any reference at all, either to Shear Jashub, or his age: and thirdly, it would be most ridiculous to say, that such an event would happen before the child should know to refuse the evil and choose the good, and gravely to inform us, that he should eat butter and honey to enable him to do it, when the event was in fact to take place seven hundred years before his birth. It appears to me, that it would be an outrage upon common sense, to propose to any set of men as a sign of an unhoped for and unexpected event, which it was predicted should happen within two or three years, another event still more extraordinary, which was not to happen till hundreds of years after they should be all in their graves: and why should we make all these forced, unnatural, and fanciful conjectures, when there is an easy and obvious interpretation, which makes the sign, as it ought to do, not only precede the event, but happen very shortly after, in the life-time of all who heard the prophecy?

To suppose that the mere repetition of an old promise, which had not been performed, and was not to be so for many centuries, could rationally be proposed for a sign, that a new promise should be fulfilled very shortly, a supposition which has nothing whatever in the text to support it, and is also entirely a creature

the counsel of their enemies against them should come to nought, for God was with them: the first referring to the child to whom the name was to be given, merely as a sign that God was with his countrymen the Jews; the second, to the land in which they dwelt, calling it the land of God who was with them; and the third, to the people of that land, announcing to them that the counsel of their enemies against them, should come to nought, for God was with them. Taking all three together, as they were all spoken for the same purpose, that is, to assure the Jews, that the existing combination against them should fail, it is quite manifest, that the only God who is stated to have been with the Jews upon this occasion, in all three instances, was that God who spake to the fathers by the prophets, who in this instance spake to them by the prophet Isaiah, and who in the New Testament is declared to have been the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, not our Lord Jesus Christ himself; that the only child referred to, was a child then born, or about to be born, and not the Messiah, who, whatever he was, was not born till seven hundred years after, and not being then in existence, could not have been with them. As to any supposed pre-existing Divine Logos, no such idea appears to have entered the mind of the prophet, or any of his audience, nor is there the most distant allusion to any such imaginary personage.

I must not forget to mention, however, that I have

been arguing upon this prophecy, on the supposition that the word num is correctly rendered in the common version, shall conceive, and shewing that it is not an authority for you, though no objection be made upon that ground: but when this comes to be further inquired into, it raises a further most formidable obstacle to your hypothesis, inasmuch as that word as stated, I find to be in the past, and to mean has conceived, or taking it in the most favourable way for you, can only be considered as a participle present, meaning is conceiving, in either of which cases the conclusion is irresistible, that it referred clearly to a young woman who had then conceived, or was conceiving, and consequently could not have been a virgin, much less a virgin then unborn, and to a child who was then conceived or conceiving, and consequently was very shortly after to come into the world, and not to a child to be conceived and born seven hundred years after.

The further we advance in the examination of this prophecy, the more we find, that it discredits the supposed first chapter of St. Matthew, instead of supporting it, as it appears with increasing evidence to be no prediction relating to the Messiah at all, much less that he should be conceived and born of a virgin.

You mistake me, if you suppose that my remarks on the incarnation relate in any considerable degree to the *mode* of it. My great object throughout has been to deny the fact, and to shew that in whatever manner it is believed by its advocates to exist, there is no foundation for the doctrine itself, either in the Old or the New Testament; that they have been mistaken in the texts they have cited in support of it; and that there are numerous passages in the Scriptures which are inconsistent with it. In these respects I think I have succeeded, but have troubled myself very little about the alleged mode of existence of what I consider to be a non-entity. Wherever I may have touched upon it at all, it has been but slightly, and principally for the purpose of shewing, that the explanations given of it by the supporters of the doctrine, were inconsistent with each other, or led to absurdities: but it was no doubt extremely convenient to pass over my arguments in opposition to the fact of the incarnation, which constituted the strongest and most material parts of my observations upon the subject, by saying, "All your remarks concerning the mode of the incarnation are answered by the simple consideration, that we know not the mode in which the Deity operates in any case." We certainly do not know the precise manner in which the Deity operates upon any occasion, unless he is pleased to reveal it to us, nor did I ever say, or suppose, that we do. But if you yourself tell us, that he does operate in a particular way, that is, in becoming incarnate in a man, and require us to believe it, we are entitled to call upon you to prove such an extraordinary assertion, which you have failed to comply with.

You add, "that in this the account of the incarnation bears marks of genuine Scripture, that it is not attempted to explain the mode, as the Schoolmen afterwards did." If this be a mark of genuine Scripture, then if there had been an account of the Logos having been incarnate in Moses, without attempting to explain the mode of his incarnation, it would have borne marks of genuine Scripture. But do not the supposed accounts of the incarnation of our Lord contain any attempt at all to explain the mode of his supposed incarnation? Does not the supposed first chapter of St. Matthew, verse 18, say that Mary his mother was found with child by the Holy Ghost? Does not the supposed first chapter of St. Luke, verse 35; say, that the Holy Ghost should come upon her, and the power of the Highest overshadow her? And are not these something like attempts to shew how it was, that the infant became incarnate of something more than man? though they do not, such as they are, shew that he became incarnate of the supposed Divine Logos, the second person in the Trinity, according to the commonly received hypothesis, but rather the contrary. It is true, however, that these accounts say but little upon the subject, and certainly the less the better, for from the third or fourth century downwards, even to the present times, learned men have toiled most piteously, but most unsuccessfully, to accomplish it, having entangled themselves in numberless contradictions and absurdities to no purpose.

tiori, that any ends of discipline, for which it is supposed to have taken place, are there assigned; and you have proved neither. Your demand to have them admitted, is like that of the  $\delta o = \pi o v \sigma \tau \omega$  of Archimedes, or, in plain English, Give me a place to stand upon, which, in my humble opinion, you will never obtain.

It is highly deserving of remark too, whilst considering John vii. 16, that our Lord, when he excludes himself, by saying that his doctrine is not his, excludes also the Holy Ghost, by declaring that it is his who sent him, which the Holy Ghost never did, nor is pretended to have done; but the Father only. When our Lord so expressly asserts, that his doctrine is not his own, but his who sent him, is it not most extraordinary that any rational being who gives him credit for speaking the truth, should seriously maintain, that it is his own doctrine, and also the doctrine of another person called the Holy Ghost, as well as the Father's, and that notwithstanding what he says, though it is so clear and so plain, the Father was not the sole author of it?

Nothing can more strikingly exemplify the nature of the proofs resorted to in support of these extraordinary doctrines, which ought to be the strongest, clearest, and most unexceptionable in every respect, than your quoting such a text as Heb. ii. 16: "For verily he took not on him the nature of Angels, but took on him the seed of Abraham," to prove that St. Paul was acquainted with the doctrine of the incar-

nation, and was adverting to it in that text. I can only account for it by your having been totally misled by the common version; for whoever looks into the Greek will perceive immediately, that a more unsatisfactory and inauspicious passage for this purpose could not have been selected; as in the first place the word nature is not to be found in it, but owes its introduction into the English version solely to the imagination of the translator, who, however, to do him justice, has put it, together with the word him, in two places, and the word the, which he has also inserted, because he could not, without them, after introducing the word nature, make sense of the passage, in Italics: and secondly, the word επιλαμβανεται has many significations, and it is by no means certain which is the right, but that in the common version makes no sense at all without inserting additional words. I shall present you with the version of a very recent, if not one of the most recent, Trinitarian writers upon the subject of it, which is, "For truly it is not the Angels whom he succoureth, but he succoureth the posterity of Abraham." It might have been, "For truly he succoureth not Angels, but succoureth the seed of Abraham," and then it would have been literal, and have made perfectly good sense, without any addition. The translation of Archbishop Newcome is like it, namely, "For indeed Christ helpeth not Angels, but he helpeth the seed of Abraham." These versions, and the second is a literal one, which the common

version is not, destroy every vestige of an allusion to the incarnation or even pre-existence of our Lord, and it follows easily and naturally the preceding verse, which having stated, "that he was to deliver them who through fear of death were all their life-time subject to bondage," meaning his brethren the descendants of Abraham, this verse says "for verily he succoureth not angels, but succoureth the seed of Abraham."

Nevertheless, as you may perhaps say, Though the verse I have quoted for the purpose does not, when strictly scrutinized, prove it, yet the very next, ver. 17, does, and it has been often cited as evidence of it, I shall examine that likewise; and supposing the rendering of the common version to be correct, "Wherefore it behoved him in all things to be made like unto his brethren," it would not follow, as has been supposed by many Trinitarians, that he had previously existed in another state, and was then made like his brethren; for if it did, the seventh verse of the same chapter speaking of man in general, and saying, "Thou madest him a little lower than the Angels, thou crownedst him with glory and honour," would equally prove, that every man had pre-existed, and had from some previous state, whatever it was, been made a little lower than the angels. But as the latter does not prove our own pre-existence, so neither can the former prove the pre-existence of Christ. If it behoved him in all things to be made like unto his

brethren, and they were made men, it follows that Christ was made a man as they were; but it does not follow, that either the one or the other pre-existed, of which there is not the most distant intimation. It was the design of the writer of the epistle, in the 7th and 9th verses, to shew that they were all made, and that all of them, that is, Christ and his brethren, were made men. Nothing can be more plain. The distinction throughout, if we will but open our eyes to see it, is between Christ and the angels, and between the human race at large, particularly the brethren of Christ, that is the seed of Abraham, and the angels, in conformity to which, we are told, ver. 7, that man was made a little lower than the angels, and ver. 9, that Christ was made a little lower than the angels; and the object of the author of the epistle afterwards is, to inform us why Christ was made a man, and not an angel, who was also made as well as he, namely, ver. 9, that he, Christ, by the favour of God might taste death for every man, which he could not have done if he had been made an angel, the angels being considered to have been made immortal, and consequently incapable of death: also, ver. 10, that he might be made perfect through sufferings; and verses 14, 15, that through death he might destroy him who had the power of death, and deliver them who through the fear of death were all their life-time subject to bondage, that is, other men: also, ver. 16, that he succoureth not angels, and for a very good reason,

because, being immortal, they do not require his assistance in this respect; but that he succoureth the seed of Abraham, and for a reason equally good, namely, that being liable to death, and through the fear of it all their life-time subject to bondage, they stood in the utmost need of such assistance, for which reason it is said, ver. 17, that in all things it behoved him to be made like unto them, that he might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people, for that, in that he himself hath suffered, being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted.

The second chapter of the Hebrews, therefore, when properly explained, not only supplies no evidence either of the incarnation, or of the pre-existence of our Lord, but is adverse to both, as it shews that he was made a little lower than the angels, as every one else is, and that in all things it behoved him to be made, or to be, like unto his brethren, that is other men of his own nation, ver. 17, which he could not have been, if he had been a compound being, having two natures, the one divine, and the other human, which no other man ever had, "that he might be," for so the word yantai is translated here, though the same verb is rendered made in some parts of the first chapter of St. John, "a merciful and faithful high priest." Hence it appears, that all these texts are perfectly consistent with each other, and all unite in proving, that Jesus Christ was a man and nothing

more. The seventh verse of the second chapter of the Hebrews representing, that man was made a little lower than the Angels, the ninth verse that Jesus was made a little lower than the angels, (as other men are,) the 17th verse, that in all things it behoved him to be made, or to be, like his brethren, that is, to be, or to be made, a man, as other men were. This is one case out of many, in which we perceive the advantage of making the Scriptures their own interpreters.

The same word made is likewise in the common version, particularly in the first chapter of St. John, sometimes given as the rendering of the word eyevero; but if this were the only proper meaning of the word, where this translation of it is adopted, how obvious is the remark, that as Jesus is said to have been made a little lower than the angels, in the epistle to the Hebrews, as other men are, so the same Jesus, who is figuratively called the word, probably because he was commissioned to declare, and did declare, the word of God to mankind more fully than any of the former messengers of the Most High, (see p. 30-32) may have been said in the Gospel of St. John to have been made flesh, as other men are. It should, nevertheless, be remembered, that the word eyevero at least does not require any such meaning, but might; and as I contend ought, to have been translated was, as the very same word is translated by the very same translators in this 2nd chapter of the Hebrews, ver. 2, and as the word yevnras, which is another tense of the

same verb, is in the same chapter, verse 17, properly rendered might be.

Whoever wishes to see another instance of the same word eyevero, translated by the same translators was: in the very same chapter of St. John, has nothing to do but to turn to the sixth verse; and if he wishes to pursue the inquiry a little further, I will refer him to Luke i. 5, which, though in my judgement spurious, is still a very ancient writing; and to 1 Cor. ii. 3. where the word sysvound, from the same verb givoual, is thus translated by the same persons,—and also to the Septuagint version of the Old Testament, which was in extensive use in the time of the Apostles, and long before, where he will find, Judges xvii. 1. xix. 1. and 2nd Samuel, there called 2 Kings, ii. 18, the very same word eyevero, used in the same sense of was, and in the 17th verse the word exerover used in the sense of were, which are the words actually made use of by our translators in the common version from the Hebrew in those texts.

You seem to have fallen into a strange puzzle, not only by taking it for granted, from an erroneous translation of the 16th verse of the second chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews, that St. Paul adverts to the Incarnation, but by quoting him from memory, and doing it inaccurately, putting the words, "he is not ashamed to call them brethren" in the 11th verse after the erroneous interpretation of the 16th verse, which you have also transposed, inserting also the words, "I

will put my trust in him" in the 13th verse after the whole; by which you have, though no doubt inadvertently, entirely misrepresented his meaning; for whoever reads the passage, as it stands in the original, will see, that it is because both he that sanctifieth, that is Christ, and they that are sanctified, that is his disciples, are all of one, that is of God, he, Christ, is not ashamed to call them brethren, though, as had been just before mentioned, he had been made the captain of their salvation, that is, had been advanced to a station of great pre-eminence over them in the work of their salvation, having been made their chief, or captain, in this great work.

How you can consider your remarks founded upon these misquotations, and upon the supposition, that IF the incarnation for the ends of discipline, which is all imaginary, be admitted, our Lord must have been placed in the subordinate and dependent state you have mentioned, to be a sufficient reply to mine, on the angel strengthening him, I cannot conceive, nor what colour there can be, for requiring me to admit, that the Almighty God who created all things, and fills the universe with his presence, was incarnate in a man, with all his glorious energies and attributes suspended, and doing nothing, during the third part of a century. No rational being could be expected to credit this, without the most clear and express revelation. But where are we to look for any revelation of such a monstrous proposition? It is sufficient

for me to deny the fact, and to call for the proof of it. If any system maker, in the folly of human invention, had pretended that the Father was incarnate, he might have done it with rather greater plausibility, inasmuch as he might have quoted our Lord's own words, "The Father who dwelleth in me, he doth the works;" but what colour is there for supposing, that another infinite and almighty person, of whom our Lord says nothing at all, was incarnate, and consequently dwelt in him likewise? There is no end, however, to such speculations. I can account for the angel strengthening our Lord, according to the plain and simple narrative of the fact, as delivered in the Scriptures, unconnected with any system, without the least difficulty, and certainly without supposing that one, who, to use your own language, was infinite, eternal, and SUPREME, was placed in a subordinate and dependent state, with all his stupendous powers inactive, and unexercised, for upwards of three and thirty years.

Our Lord himself, as I have remarked already, makes the supposition of his being desirous of delivering himself from the state of danger and difficulty in which he was placed; but how does he say that he could have accomplished it, had such been his wish? By exercising the powers of a supposed second nature, which lay dormant in him? No such thing; but simply by praying to the Father for his, the Father's assistance.

You tell me that I observe prayer is never offered

to Christ; in reply to which you state, "that the Scriptures say that Stephen the proto-martyr died offering the most solemn prayer to him to receive his soul, and that nothing appears to you more futile, than the answer given by some, that Stephen then saw Christ; for if it were right for Stephen to die asking Christ to receive his soul, you cannot see what difference it could make whether he saw his Lord with the eye of the body or the mind."

The answer is obvious. When we see a person with the eye of the body, and make our requests to him as visibly present, it does not follow, that we consider him to be possessed of ubiquity, omniscience, or any other attribute of Deity: but when with the eye of the mind we contemplate an invisible Being, and make our requests to him, we thereby ascribe to him omnipresence and omniscience, and the requests so made to such a Being, under such circumstances, are strictly and properly prayers.

Let us see now what the case of Stephen was. It appears that when he had closed his defence before the council, his enemies being violently enraged, and gnashing upon him with their teeth, he looked up into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God, which having declared to them, they ran upon him and cast him out of the city, and stoned him, invoking, (not calling upon God, as inserted in Italics in the common version, there being no such word as God in the original,) and

saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit, when kneeling down, and crying with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge, he expired. Now it is not stated when the heavenly vision, during which our Lord appeared in his sight, was withdrawn. The probability is, that as it first appeared to encourage him when his enemies were upon the point of laying violent hands upon him, it continued for the same purpose, during the short period of outrage which terminated his existence; and his calling upon Jesus, whom we are told he had just before seen, would upon any other occasion be considered evidence that he still continued to see him; in which case his requesting him, who had assured all his disciples that he would raise them up at the last day, to receive his spirit, or dying breath, and desiring him who had declared that he had on earth power to forgive sins, not to lay the sin of his persecutors to their charge, are quite different from prayers offered, when there is no personal presence, to God, who, though invisible, is omnipresent and omniscient.

In the parable of the rich man and Lazarus, in the 16th chapter of St. Luke, when Abraham on the death of Lazarus had received him into his bosom, and the rich man after his death, being in torment in hell, lift up his eyes and saw Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom, and cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue,

for I am tormented in this flame, - such a petition, if it had been addressed to Christ under such circumstances, would, upon your principles, have been considered a prayer, and a complete proof that he was God. In a subsequent verse he continues, I pray thee therefore, father, that thou wouldst send him to my father's house. These, however, were mere requests, like those of Stephen, to one personally and visibly present, and not prayers, strictly speaking, in the sense we give to the word, when we apply it to the petitions we offer up to the infinite and invisible God. It is observable likewise, that God and Christ are as much distinguished from each other, as Abraham and Lazarus, and there is as much reason for concluding, that St. Luke in the Acts did not consider Christ. who could not stand on his own right hand, to be God, as there is for thinking that he did not in his Gospel consider Lazarus, who could not be in his own bosom. to be Abraham.

St. Paul also, who was favoured with personal and visible appearances of our Lord still more than Stephen, when speaking of the thorn in the flesh, which had been given to him, lest he should be exalted above measure by the abundance of the revelations made to him, says 2 Cor. xii. 8. that he besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from him, which may likewise be considered as requests made by Paul to Christ when personally and visibly present; which mode of explanation, both as it respects Stephen and Paul,

corresponds with the accompanying circumstances, and with the uniform practice of every one of the Apostles; whilst that of the Trinitarians is at variance with them all, is at variance with the express injunction of our Lord, that when we pray, we should pray to the Father; and has no commandment whatever in any part of Scripture to give it sanction, or make it binding upon us, which it would unquestionably have had, if it had been necessary or proper. Let the candid and unbiassed Christian therefore determine, which construction is most likely to be the true one.

Continuing this subject, you state, "that Ananias observed to Christ, Acts ix, 14, that Paul came to Damascus to bind all that called on the name of Jesus, which you say was the Hebrew phrase for worship, and that Paul afterwards addressed the Corinthians by the title of those who called on the name of the Lord Jesus, 1 Cor. i. 2." These texts however I cannot receive as proofs, happening to know, that the verb επικαλεισθαι has a passive, as well as an active signification, and therefore that παντας τους επικαλουμενους το ονομα σου may be rendered, all that are called by thy name. In this sense Mr. Locke understood the passage 1 Cor. i. 2. and considered it a periphrasis for Christians, which is plainly the design of the verse. That this verb is used in the passive sense, signifying cognominari, see also Matt. x. 3, Luke xxii. 3, Acts i. 23. 4. 36, Isa. iv. 1. It has likewise a middle, or reciprocal sense. Accordingly Mr. Wakefield translates

"all that take upon themselves the name of the Lord Jesus," and the Arabic version gives us "all who call themselves by thy name," which in substance is very similar. It sometimes also is used as a periphrasis for being truly religious. Deut. xxviii. 10, Jam. ii. 7. Finally, it has by some been observed, that επι may be translated in. Thus in Matt. xxiv. 5. πολλοι γας ελευσονται επι το ονοματι μου, for many shall come in my name, and Acts iv. 18. This would give, "all who call or pray, in thy name," as our Lord himself had commanded his disciples to do, when he should be taken from them. The texts in question therefore are no authority at all for your position.

Your next remark is, "that the Apostolic benediction," meaning I suppose 2 Cor. xiii. 14, "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit, be with you all, is nothing but a prayer to the Father, Son and Spirit;" whilst in the same breath you say, "It does not however comport with the office which the Holy Spirit holds, to be addressed in prayer as the Son; nor with that of the Son to be addressed as frequently as the Father." You cite no authority, and assign no reason, for either of these assertions; but lay them down ex cathedra, as axioms not to be controverted, not appearing to be aware, that you are imputing to the Apostle the doing of that to the Holy Spirit, which it does not comport with the office of the Holy Spirit to have done to it. I will venture to affirm, however,

that we have only to read the Apostolical benediction, to be satisfied, that it is no prayer to the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, nor any prayer at all to any one; but only a pious wish, on the part of the Apostle, that the Corinthians might enjoy the favour of Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit. It is not addressed to the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, or to any of them, but to the Corinthians, and to them only; which is decisive.

Nor do I agree with you, that if the Holy Spirit were a person, equal to the Father, and of course omnipotent, omniscient, and omnipresent, it would not comport with his office to be prayed to in his department, as well as the Father and Son in theirs. On the contrary, no reason can be assigned why he should not be addressed in prayer, to comfort and sanctify, as well as the Father to preserve, and the Son to save us. Though you state that it does not comport with the Son's office to be prayed to as often as the Father, you have supplied no means of ascertaining how often it should be; but in the absence of all precept, we should endeavour to discover what examples there are for our direction and government in this respect. To me it appears, that there are none at all. You conceive that there are; but taking those you mention to be such, it would only be when he was personally and visibly present. We should consequently have a Trinity of three personal distinctions, the first of whom is to be prayed to without limitation or restriction, the

second only when he is personally and visibly present, and the third not at all.

Whatever I may think of this state of things, I should rejoice exceedingly, if our prayers were modelled in conformity to it, for we should then, according to our Lord's commandment, when we pray, pray to the Father, and to the Father only, and we Unitarians should be able to unite with you in our prayers, with much more satisfaction than we now can, when we are obliged to be constantly upon our guard, to omit what we consider to be unscriptural and unlawful.

You inform me, "that the Saviour shews an anxiety to prove the personality of the Holy Spirit, by introducing the personal pronoun exerces, to shew that by the το πνευμα he did not mean a thing, when he promises that the comforter, who is the Holy Spirit, whom the Father would send in Christ's name (John xiv. 26.) when he came would lead them into all truth, and he would not speak of himself; but what he should hear, that he would speak, John xvi. 13. and that no sense can be made of that whole passage, and the formula of baptism, and the Apostolic benediction, with several other passages, but upon Trinitarian principles."

Had our Lord been anxious to prove the personality of the Holy Spirit, as you suppose, he might have effected it clearly and decidedly, by saying at once, that the Holy Spirit was a person, instead of leaving it to



be made out by inference, from putting the masculine pronoun exervo; into one scale, to balance the neutral article 70 in the other. Is this the way that doctrines are taught upon which men's salvation is made to depend? Can any one believe, that if a doctrine so important, as that of the Holy Spirit being a person, and a person equal to the Father, and equally to be worshipped and glorified, had been true, the whole would not have been clearly and specifically revealed in direct terms, and not left to be collected by mere inference and deduction; and that we should never have been commanded, either to pray to, worship, or glorify him? Does not the absence of all this, the want of all example and authority, from the beginning of Genesis, to the end of the Revelations, impress the mind with irresistible conviction, and prove decisively, that you are mistaken in all your inferences, and have not yet attained the true meaning of the passage?

Whoever considers the bold figurative style of the Scripture writers, and their frequent personifications, will be at no loss for the reason why the word secure; is here introduced. The Apostle John abounds in personifications, as well as the other Scripture writers, and when we find, not only wisdom, instruction, and charity, but the name of God, the BREATH of God, and almost all his attributes, personified, why should we wonder, that his spirit is personified also, whether it be used to signify himself, or his divine power and influence, displayed in the performance of miracles?

But let us see what the Spirit really was, and what account is given of it when sent, according to our Lord's prediction in the passage you have cited. We shall find a very particular account of it in the second Chapter of the Acts, where it is said, that the disciples were filled with it, and began to speak with other tongues, that is, to speak miraculously languages they had never learned, as the spirit, το πνευμα, with the neuter article, without the masculine pronoun, gave them utterance; and the Apostle Peter, in his first sermon, gives this account of it, verses 16, 17, 38: "But this is 70, that thing," for the Apostle here does not use any personification, but speaks in plain terms, "which was spoken of by the Prophet Joel, and it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams;" and having afterwards stated, verse 32, that God had raised up Christ, who had received of the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, adds, "he hath shed forth, τοῦτο, this THING, & which ye now see and hear," and further informs his audience, verse 38, that if they repented and were baptized, they should every one of them receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. The description thus given of the Holy Spirit, as something poured out upon all flesh, as shed forth, and as a gift, though it would be ridiculous as applied to a person, who cannot be conceived of as poured out, or shed

forth, or made a present of to multitudes at the same time, was suitable, and appropriate, in application to miraculous powers or influences, which the Apostle's own words shew, was all that he had an idea of upon the occasion; which powers and influences he represents as having been communicated, not by a supposed Holy Spirit, but by Christ himself, and to have been themselves the Holy Spirit, which Christ had received the promise of from his Father; nor does he say one syllable throughout his discourse, of a PERSON called the Holy Spirit, though expressly treating upon the subject. What reason can be assigned for this omission? Let any Trinitarian put himself in the Apostle's place, and say, whether when teaching the great doctrines of Christianity in the first Christian sermon ever preached, and giving an account, both of the Son and the Spirit, he could have omitted the most important of them all, and have spoken of the former only as a man, and of the latter merely as something poured out, shed forth, and given. No Unitarian could have made a more completely Unitarian discourse.

The same Apostle afterwards tells us, Acts x. 38, "that God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit," but shews plainly what he meant by the Holy Spirit, by adding, "and with power," using the latter word, it would appear, synonymously, and shewing what our Lord did, in consequence of being so anointed,

namely, that he went about doing good, and healing all who were oppressed of the devil, that is, working miracles, and why? Let St. Luke himself answer the question, because o Ocos, that is the Father, was with him; not because the Divine Logos, the supposed second person in the Trinity, was with him, or constituted a part of him; not because an imaginary person called God the Holy Ghost was with him, and assisted him; but because & Ocos, that is the Father, was with him. How incongruous, not to say ridiculous, would the whole of this passage be, upon the supposition of the Holy Spirit being a PERSON! What Trinitarian even would not be shocked, if told in plain terms, that God the Father anointed God the Son with God the Holy Spirit? Would it not be just as absurd as to say, that the Apostle Peter anointed the Apostle Paul with the Apostle John?

We have a singular instance of the figurative use of this word in the Old Testament, 2 Kings ii. 9, before alluded to, where Elisha prayed Elijah, that a double portion of his, Elijah's, spirit might be upon him, which Elijah promised, if he was with him when he was taken away; and this having happened, and Elisha having in consequence wrought a signal miracle, by dividing the waters of Jordan, the sons of the prophets who beheld it said, verse 15, that the spirit of Elijah rested on Elisha; but does any one believe, that the spirit of Elijah was a Person, or any thing

else than the miraculous POWER, which had been bestowed upon Elijah, and which, on his being taken up into Heaven, was communicated to Elisha?

The Spirit of God and the Holy Spirit are represented as dwelling in persons, 1 Cor. iii. 16. 2 Tim. i. 14; and so, in language similarly figurative, are *Faith*, 2 Tim. i. 5. the *word* of Christ, Col. iii. 16. and *Sin*, Rom. vii. 17. 20. Sometimes also the Spirit is said to be given by *measure*, and sometimes without measure, both of which are totally inapplicable to a person.

The Scripture writers also frequently use the term Spirit of a person, to denote the person himself. Thus 1 Cor. xvi. 18. "They have refreshed my spirit and yours," that is, me and you. "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit:" that is, with you, Gal. vi. 18. So the Spirit of God is explained to mean the same thing as to God, that the spirit of a man does as to a man, 1 Cor. ii. 11. "For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? Even so the things of God knoweth no one, but the Spirit of God."

But our Lord's prediction having been, that the Spirit, when sent, would lead the disciples into all truth, let us inquire, what truth it led them into the knowledge of, when it came. Was it that the Spirit itself was a person in the Godhead distinct from, but equal to, the Father and the Son, and together with them to be praised, worshipped, and glorified, as the

Trinitarians affirm? If it were, they ought to be able to tell us, without difficulty, where this surprising revelation stands recorded. If we search the whole book of Acts; if we examine every one of the Apostolical epistles; if we read through the Apocalypse from the beginning to the end, we shall not meet with a single passage, where any thing of this nature appears to have been communicated to any person: we shall not find a single precept, to pray to, praise, or glorify, the Spirit, or a single instance, of any one having ever done so. If then the Spirit, which was to lead them into all truth, did not lead them into the knowledge of this, it follows as demonstrably as that two and two make four, that it is not the truth, and ought not to be received as such by Christians.

Why should we not be able to make sense of the passage in question, in St. John's gospel, without understanding the Spirit to be a real person, as well as of the passage in Proverbs viii. 1—4. without understanding wisdom to be a real person, where it is personified in like manner, and thus spoken of in the feminine gender, as if it were a real female; "Doth not wisdom cry, and understanding put forth her voice? She standeth on the top of high places, by the way in the places of the paths. She crieth at the gates, at the entry of the city, at the coming in at the doors. Unto you, O men, I call, and my voice is to the sons of man." In both cases we consider the language to be figurative, and, by the assistance of a

little common sense, understand both, without any difficulty. Upon the same principle we discover how the Spirit is said to be poured out, shed forth, bestowed as a gift; how persons can be said to be filled with it, anointed with it, baptized with it, and the like. There is no reason whatever for our adopting a construction, which is not sanctioned by any of the plain and express declarations of Scripture, which has occasioned the setting up an imaginary person, and investing him with the attributes of the Supreme Being, and has unhappily ended in our praying to, worshipping, and glorifying him, the whole of which is utterly irreconcileable, both with the precepts, and the practice, of every one of the Prophets, Apostles, and Evangelists, and of our Lord himself, the greatest authority of all.

The formula of baptism, and the Apostolic benediction, I have considered already, neither of which requires or countenances any such monstrous doctrine.

My argument against the divinity of Christ from his words concerning the day of judgment, you say, "you think inconclusive, though you agree that I shew the impropriety of the rendering, commissioned to make known; still however you observe it is manifest, that the Apostles wrote Greek with the ideas of men to whom Hebrew was more natural, and that the Hebrew word 'to know,' in the Hyphil, signifies 'to make known,' in the sense the Apostle uses it when

he says, I am determined to know nothing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified (1 Cor. ii. 2.). And now unto the Principalities and Powers in heavenly places is known by the church the manifold wisdom of God, that is, made known (Ephes. iii. 10.) that you consider that our Lord designs to say, that no man makes known the day of judgment, nor does any Angel, nor does the Son, which by the way you say shews, that Christ distinguishes himself from men and angels, but that the Father will announce that day, either by revealing it by an audible voice from Heaven, or by sending his son to judge the world, that this best accords with the passage where the words occur, for that there was no reason why Christ should speak of mere knowledge of the day of judgment, though there was great reason to suppose that the Apostles, to whom Christ was speaking, were curious to know, and in hope that Christ would inform them; to check which he said that none that had intercourse with men, told that secret, and that after all it is not certain that it refers to the day of judgment at all."

In this place, my friend, you furnish us, I dare say without being conscious of it, with another specimen of the singular practice adopted by many of the Trinitarian writers, which they have used so long, that they think they have a prescription for it, of interpreting plain passages by obscure ones, instead of obscure by plain ones. The two texts, Matt. xxiv. 36. Mark xiii. 32, are both so clear, that they require no expla-

nation. He that runs may read, and he that reads, if left to himself, must and will immediately understand them. There is no ambiguity whatever, nor any difficulty, except that of creating a doubt about their meaning; but it is exceedingly doubtful, to say the least, whether the word ειδεναι, in the first of the texts you quote, which, as well as oide, and oider before a vowel, is part of the Greek verb ειδεω, is to be understood in the sense of the corresponding Hebrew word in the Hyphil, that is, to make known, or in the plain obvious sense of the Greek word, meaning simply to know. In the first the Apostle, beginning at the first verse, informs the Corinthians, that when he came to them, he came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto them the testimony of God, for he determined not to know any thing among them, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified. Now what were the Corinthians when the Apostle came to them, but Idolaters and Jews? and is it to be supposed, that he here meant to speak in the hyphil, and to tell them, especially the former, who knew nothing about the hyphil, that he determined to make nothing known to them, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified; when he had to teach the former, that there was but one God the Father Almighty, the maker of heaven and earth; and the latter, that the Gentiles were to be admitted to a participation of all the privileges which they supposed to be confined to their own nation, and that both should alike be endued with miraculous powers?

What reason can there be for fancying that the same writer has used the same verb four times in the compass of a few verses in different senses, and one of them in a sense in which the greater part of his readers would not have understood it, without any intimation, or any necessity for it? Whoever will cast his eyes but a little lower down, will find in the 11th verse the very word order used twice by the Apostle in the sense of 'knoweth,' and in the 12th verse the word erdemen, in the sense of 'we might know.' What he determined not to know any thing of, but only Jesus Christ, and him crucified, was their oratory and worldly wisdom, and senseless controversies, to which he had alluded but just before.

The next passage you quote, Ephes. iii. 10, is fatal to your own argument, as it demonstrates, that the Apostle Paul, who was a Hebrew, and accustomed to the Hyphil, if he designed to be understood in the sense you imagine, knew better, when addressing, not only Jews, but Gentiles also, who knew nothing of the Hyphil, in the Greek language, which has no such voice, than to employ the Greek verb wide, from which comes older, and which signifies only 'to know,' in the sense of 'making known,' a sense in which none of the latter would have understood it. He therefore made use of another word, namely, yraquobn from yraqu'a, one of the ordinary meanings of which is 'to make known.' What right have we then to assume, that St. Matthew or his translator, and St. Mark, particu-

larly the latter, were so ignorant, or so negligent, as to use the word order, quite a different word, conveying a different meaning, in a sense in which the persons for whose benefit they wrote in the Greek language, would never understand it? Such a supposition, without any evidence whatever to support it, looks as if those who make it were driven to their last shifts.

If our Lord had spoken in the Hyphil, the Apostle Matthew would have written in the Hyphil, and the Greek translator, seeing the sign of the Hyphil, would have translated the word by a Greek word giving a corresponding meaning, and would never have used the word order, which does not correspond with the Hebrew word in the Hyphil voice, but signifies 'to' know,' and not 'to make known.' It is clear therefore, that the Apostle did not write, nor our Lord speak, in the Hyphil, and this is confirmed, if further proof were requisite, by the corresponding passage, Mark xiii. 32, already mentioned, where that Evangelist, whose Gospel was originally written in Greek, used the very same Greek word, furnishing another proof, that our Lord was not in his, Mark's, time, -and he had much better means of knowing the fact, than we have, who come so long after him, -understood to have spoken in the Hyphil, which after all is nothing more than conjecture, the conjecture of a much later period, made only to defend a mere human invention against the plain words of Scripture, without a shadow of evidence to support it.

Let us now try your proposed version of 'making known,' by the same test as Mr. Wardlaw's, that of 'commissioned to make known,' was tried, and found wanting (p. 72.), that is, by putting it into the text. We shall then read as follows: 'But that day no one maketh known, no not the Angels who are in Heaven, neither the Son, but my Father only,' which implies that they all knew it; for if they did not, how ridiculous, not to say childish, would it be to affirm, that neither A nor B nor C made known a thing which we are quite sure they knew nothing at all about! On the other hand, if they knew it, there was no occasion for its being further made known; whilst upon either supposition, the latter part of the clause, according to this strange interpretation, affirms that the Father does make it known, and consequently that it is no secret.

The obvious conclusion, from the assertion, that neither A nor B nor C makes a thing known, is, that they all know it, but do not choose to disclose it. Who can for an instant imagine this to be the Apostle's meaning, who only casts his eye over the words he has made use of? Why should we fancy his words and his meaning to be in direct opposition to each other, as we must upon this supposition? I differ from you entirely in your opinion that there was no reason for our Lord to speak of mere knowledge. On the contrary, it appears to me, that if the Apostles were curious to know that great day, and were in hopes

that he would inform them, the greatest and mostffectual check he could give them, would be to te
them plainly at once, that no one knew it but the Father only, not even he himself, which is exactly what
he has done; for then they would immediately perceive,
that all further inquiry must be fruitless: but if we
suppose with you, that he only said that men did not
make it known, that Angels did not make it known,
that he himself did not make it known, but that his
Father only made it known, it might put them upon
inquiring what men knew it, or what Angels knew it,
or induce them to ask him again at another time, in
hopes that what he did not make known to them at
one time, he might at another.

Finally, let me entreat you to tell me what motive we can have, for departing from the plain and ordinary construction of the word the two evangelists have given us, which not only presents us with a clear and consistent sense, but also with a noble climax in every way suitable to the sublimity, and solemnity, of the subject—but of that day, and that hour, knoweth no one, no not the Angels which are in Heaven, neither the Son, but my Father only, when the adoption of another will not only destroy the magnificence of the passage, but encumber us with unnecessary difficulties and perplexities.

In reply to your observation, that Christ distinguishes himself from men, I shall merely remark, that you have been misled once more by the common ver-

have found in both texts,—for Matth. xxiv. 36. is not, as Mr. Wardlaw imagines, a solitary text; but is confirmed by Mark xiii. 32.—that the word made use of is over, no one, which gives a very intelligible and beautiful meaning, without any such distinction as you have supposed, being in Matt. "but of that day, and that hour, knoweth no one, no not the Angels of Heaven, but my Father only:"—and in Mark, "but of that day, and that liour, knoweth no one, no not the Angels who are in Heaven, no not the Son, but the Father."

Whether these words refer with certainty to the day of judgment, or not, does not in the least affect my argument; for they certainly do refer to some great event, the time of the accomplishment of which, whatever it may be, was not known to any one, except the Father, no not to the heavenly ministers called Angels, nor even to the Son, but to the Father only.

Against these texts, my friend, the whole panoply of Trinitarian warfare will not avail you. Like solid rocks, unshaken by all the waves of theological controversy, they still bear, as they always have, and ever will, their invincible testimony to the sole omniscience of the Father, and consequently prove, upon the authority of Christ himself, that Christ is not God.

You proceed to say; "As to the hypothesis of a MERE creature being qualified to judge the world, it is utterly contrary to the Scriptures, which declare that

God is judge himself; Ps. 1. 6; and thus when Paul says, "We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, (Rom. xiv. 10, 12,) he proves it by quoting the words in which Jehovah swears that every knee should bow to him, (Is. xlv. 23,) and concludes by saying, So then every one of us must give account of himself to God."

This alludes, I believe, to the following passage in my second Letter, (p. 84,) "Shall we say then, as we are invited to do by this writer, that the Almighty, omniscient, and infinite author of all, cannot qualify a finite being, one of the human race, in an exalted and glorified state, and endued with enlarged faculties, and powers, to judge a finite, and inconceivably small part of the inhabitants of this diminutive speck, which is in itself an inconceivably small proportion of his immense dominions?" Now what is there in this, which is utterly contrary to any part of Scripture? What is there that militates against any one of the texts you have quoted? Nothing whatever. Where is it said in Scripture, either that God has appointed; any one to this high office who is not qualified for it, and whom he neither will, nor can, qualify to perform its duties, or that Jesus Christ when he was appointed to it, when God committed all judgment to him, John v. 22, was so perfect, so wise, or so powerful, as not to require any qualification, instruction, or assistance, to enable him to fulfil its duties? Did it not behove him to be in all things like unto his brethren?

Heb. ii. 17. Was it not necessary for him, even after this declaration that all judgment had been committed unto him, to learn, that is, to learn obedience, by the things which he suffered? Heb. v. 8. Does not this imply, that he was capable of disobedience, and that if he had not learned obedience by suffering, he might have been disobedient to his heavenly Father, as other men are, and that one end of his sufferings was to teach him obedience? Was it not necessary that he should after this be made perfect, which necessarily implies that he was not so before, through sufferings? Heb. ii. 10. Was he sufficiently powerful, after this, to perform any one mighty work by his own power or authority? Does he not declare, after this, that of himself he could do nothing? John v. 30; that it was his FATHER, who dwelt in him, that did the works? John xiv. 10. Does he not after this declare, that his doctrine, and his words, were not his own, but his that sent him; and is he to act by his own power, or authority, in the future state? On the contrary, will it not be the same Almighty Father, who will in the next world, as he did in this, dwell in him, and do the works, in short, put all things under him? 1 Cor. xv. 27. How then can it be asserted to be utterly contrary to Scripture, to affirm, that God can qualify one of the human race for the important office of universal judge at the end of the world? On the other hand, is it not perfectly conformable to the Scriptures, and do they not expressly declare, that God has appointed

one of our race in the person of our Lord Jesus Christ, "the man whom he hath ordained," to that high office, and that he can and will qualify, and has been qualifying him for it, teaching him, John viii. 28, instructing him, revealing his will, his doctrines, and his words to him, from the beginning of his ministry?

With regard to the words, MERE creature, which is a favorite Trinitarian gloss, a kind of tertium quid, as the logicians call it, which you have put upon me, designed I suppose to convey the idea of a creature acting only by his own power, see what I have said upon this subject pp. 76, 78, to which it is scarcely worth while for me to add in this place, that they are not my words, it having been my constant practice to speak of our Lord according to his own representation of himself, as a person empowered, assisted, and enabled, by his Father, to perform every mighty act which he has performed already, or is to perform hereafter.

You are too cautious however to venture to take the affirmative upon you, and to assert that the Almighty cannot qualify a mere creature, to use your own terms, to judge the whole human race; and in this you are perfectly right, for it would be nothing less than limiting the holy one of Israel, and denying the existence of one of the most essential of his attributes, nothing less than affirming, that the Almighty is not almighty. You have gone no further

than to say, that it is utterly contrary to Scripture; which you have not proved.

When I read, Acts xvii. 30, 31, that God, & Ocos, standing absolutely, and without qualification, a name by which Christ is never called, but the Father only hath appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained, whereof he hath given assurance unto all, in that he hath raised him from the dead," I consider that the Judgments which are to be so given, will be the Judgments of God himself, which he will pronounce by the agency, or instrumentality, of the man whom he hath ordained, and whom he will qualify, empower, and enable to pronounce them. This would dispose of your quotation from the Psalms, a quotation which you have made, but which the Apostle has not, even if it referred to the general judgment with so much certainty, as to entitle you to quote it upon this occasion; but instead of this, it appears by the following verse to be just as likely to relate to some judgment to be pronounced upon the Israelitish nation only.

Supposing St. Paul in Rom. xiv. 10, 12, to have quoted Is. xlv. 23, in which Jehovah swears that every knee shall bow to him, which is by no means clear, for some of the words which St. Paul says are written, are not to be found there, for instance the words, "as I live, saith the Lord," and the words, "and every tongue shall confess;" whilst on the other hand there is nothing

said by St. Paul about swearing, still it would furnish no proof of Christ being God; for as God, even the Father, is represented to have committed all judgment to the Son, John v. 22, to have given him authority to execute judgment also, John v. 27, to have declared, Acts xvii. 31, that he will judge the world in righteousness by the man whom he hath ordained, the risen and exalted Jesus being here spoken of as a man and nothing more, and in Rom. ii. 16, that he will judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ, it is quite plain, that we may consider the judgments of God; who is represented to be the principal, who will judge the world, and of Christ who is represented to be the agent, by whom God will judge it, to be one and the same thing, and to be the judgments of God himself, without regarding Christ, who is represented to be the agent of God on these occasions, to be himself God. On the contrary, as he is for this purpose called throughout a man, and nothing more, we have no. right to infer from it that he is any thing more. So the bowing of the knee to Jesus Christ when invested with the authority, and acting as the representative, of Jehovah, who will dwell in him, and act by him, upon this occasion, will in effect be bowing it to Jehovah, as every man's giving an account of himself to him upon the same occasion, must in effect be a giving an account of himself to God.

Thus, if we read in any other book than the Bible, that the King's debtors are to account to him for the

sums they owe him, we understand it immediately to mean, that they are to appear before his officer duly authorized to receive and pass such accounts, and account to him, which it is every day's practice to consider, as accounting to the king himself: but if this be so in the case of an earthly sovereign, how much more in that of the omnipresent Father, who is always present with his Judges and ministers every where! So the judgments pronounced by the King's Judges, are universally considered to be the King's judgments. There is no difficulty upon the subject; all is plain A B C, except when it connects itself with religious controversy.

After admitting that the Father hath committed all judgment to him, you tell me, "that when I observe, that it is not said because he is God, but because he is the son of man, I seem to lose sight of the consideration that if he were a mere man, it would be the strangest of all reasons, for at that rate every one of us who is so, should be made judge; but since our Lord voluntarily became son of man, his final glory is given as an appropriate honour and reward," for which you cite again the passage in the 2nd chapter of the Epistle to the Philippians as it stands in the common version, which I have considered already, p. 204—24, and shall refer you to what I have there said, as it will sufficiently speak for itself.

You appear to forget, that if our Lord's being the son of man be the strangest of all reasons for the fa-

ther's committing all judgment to him, it is the very reason he has himself assigned for it, John v. 27, a reason too, which would not be true, upon the Trinitarian hypothesis of his being born of a Virgin, for in that case he would not be the son of man, but only the son of woman, and might be expected frequently to be called so, which is not the fact. I should be glad to be informed, where we are told that by the phrase 'son of man,' any thing more is meant than a man, or, if you please, a mere man. Was the prophet Ezekiel any thing more than a man, and is he not called son of man more than fifty times? In short, he is scarcely ever, if ever, addressed by the Supreme Being in any other terms. Your system requires us to believe, that our Lord could not possibly exercise the office of Judge of all men, unless he was God, and consequently that this was the strongest reason for his being appointed to it. If it were so, it would of course be more frequently mentioned, and more strongly insisted upon, than the former, and weaker one, of his being the son of man. But is this the case? Who has ever assigned this reason for it at all? Popes and councils, and assemblies of Divines, perhaps; but certainly not Jesus Christ himself, nor any of his Apostles. They have assigned the former reason, and that reason only for it, but are quite silent as to the latter, which is perfectly unaccountable supposing it to be the true one, as it must have been of much more

importance than the other, and much more essential to be revealed to us.

Nor would God's appointment of our Lord Jesus Christ, the man whom he had ordained to be the Judge of the world, as St. Paul says, Acts xvii. 31. because, as he himself informs us, John v. 27. he was the son of man, which is only another form of expression, as is evident from the use of it in Ezekiel throughout, for a man, or, to use your own language, a mere man, though, according to my view of it, a man empowered, assisted, and enabled by the Father, who dwelt, and still dwells in him, be any reason for every one of us, as you oddly conclude, being appointed to the same office, but directly the contrary, for the very same reason, that if it pleased the Almighty Father to elevate a particular individual of the human race to that high station, because he was a man in all things like unto his brethren whom he was to judge, and therefore capable of making every allowance for their various temptations and infirmities, which he had himself been exposed to, as well as they, having once made choice of him for this purpose, as his chosen instrument, the man whom he had ordained, every one of us would of course stand excluded, and find ourselves among the number of those who were to be judged by him.

In reply to my observations on John xvii. 3. you say, "That you admit, that the Father is the only

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true God, in opposition to idols; but that it is not said that the Father is the only true God in opposition to the Son, and that I am aware that with your views you should say that the Father, Son, and Spirit, is the only true God, in which you should make the same assertion as the Redeemer did, though with such additions, as I should think inconsistent with it."

Now it is very extraordinary, that in this whole discourse of our Lord, and it is a very long one, there is no mention, nor any allusion, even the most distant, to idols. The words of the verse in question are, "And this is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent." The assertion is absolute. It stands, ex vi termini, in opposition to every other person. It affirms the Father to be the only true God, and excludes, not merely idols, but every other being but the Father, from being such; for if any other person, whether the Son, or the Apostle Peter, or the Apostle Paul, was the true God, or God at all, then the Father could not be the only true God. If on the other hand the Father, the Son, and the Spirit, constituted altogether the only true God, then it could not be predicated of the Father alone, that he was the only true God; but only that he was a constituent part of the only true God. At least we might expect to find somewhere in the Scriptures, the assertion that the Son is the only true God, and that the Holy Ghost is the only true God. But where are we to

look for any thing of this kind? The declaration here is, that the Father is the only true God, in absolute and unqualified terms, which excludes every other person whomsoever from being entitled to that appellation. This allegation of our Lord, that the Father is the only true God, is no more in opposition to angels, or kings, or prophets, than to himself; and yet being an absolute and unrestricted assertion, it excludes them all, as well as himself. The words in short are so clear, and plain, in their obvious and natural sense, that no doubt of their meaning could arise in the mind of any man, who had not previously heard of a system to be supported, to which, according to their plain grammatical construction, they are in direct opposition, and to which the advocates for that system find it impossible to reconcile them, without making most unauthorised and inconsistent additions to them. The party and burney which produce of the

When two persons are introduced to our notice, and one of them, namely the Son, calls the other, the only true God, I am at a loss to conceive upon what principle of common sense, we can, believing him to speak the truth, contradict him, and say that he himself is also the only true God. If with your views you can affirm that the Father, Son and Spirit is the only true God, I can only say, that this proves in my judgment, that the views you entertain are unscriptural and erroneous. Where do the Scriptures say that the Father, Son and Spirit is the only true God?

Where do they say that either the Son or the Spirit is the only true God, or call either of them the true God? You certainly would not, in saying that the Father, Son and Spirit were the only true God, be making the same assertion that the Redeemer did, for he only asserted that the FATHER was the only true God, but said not a syllable of the Son, or the Spirit; being the only true God, much less that all three were. If there be any distinction of persons at all in the supposed Trinity, the one is not the other, and what is spoken of one only, is not spoken of either of the others. Our Lord's assertion therefore, that the Father is the only true God, and yours, that the Father, Son and Spirit is the only true God, are any thing but the same assertion. These are indeed such unauthorised additions to the word of God, as no man, or body of men whatever, is in my opinion entitled to make. How should we poor Unitarians be abused, and vilified, by some of your Trinitarian brethren, if we were to venture to make such inconsistent and unauthorised additions, in favour of the Unitarian doctrines!

The Almighty Father, who, as the Author of the Epistle to the Hebrews remarks, spake by the Prophets, has by those Prophets declared, that he the Father alone is God, that there is none else, no God besides him, none like him, none equal to him, none to be compared to him.

In the passage in question, our Lord mentions him-

self as contradistinguished from the Father, that is, as a person sent by him, and applies the epithet of the only true God to the Father, but not to himself, thereby clearly excluding himself, and acknowledging that he was not God.

There is a passage in one of this Evangelist's epistles, I John v. 20, very much resembling this in point of expression, which, as it has been considered by many Trinitarians to be favourable to their hypothesis, though in my judgment wholly adverse to it, and also because each passage appears to me to throw great light upon the other, I shall here introduce, and offer some remarks upon. The words are, "And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true, and we are in him that is true, in, or by, his son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life."

In this passage we have these distinct propositions, first, that Jesus Christ has given us understanding that we may know, not himself, but him that is true; secondly, that we are in him that is true, in or by, his son Jesus Christ. It is evident therefore, that by him that is true, and Jesus Christ, are meant two distinct persons, and that Jesus Christ is the Son of him that is true, consequently by him that is true is meant the Father. Then follow the words "this is the true God and eternal life," and the question is, to which antecedent the words, 'the true God,' are designed to be applied. Nothing would be more fallacious,

than to say, that they must be applied to the last, instances to the contrary occurring continually in every known language. To bring proofs however from the Scriptures, and from this very Apostle, if we look into 2 John 7, we shall find, "Many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not, that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an Antichrist." Here if we refer the words, 'this is a deceiver and an antichrist,' to the last antecedent, we shall pronounce Jesus Christ himself to be a deceiver and an antichrist!!! See also Acts iv. 2, and vii. 19.

It must be determined therefore by the context, and by the general scope and design of the writer, in such cases, whether the words which may at any time be in question, are to be referred to the proximate, or more remote, antecedent. Here he that is true, being in the preceding part of the passage mentioned twice, as the predicate, the person principally spoken of, Jesus Christ, being only introduced collaterally, as the agent, or instrument, by whom we know, and by whom we are in, him that is true, it is most natural and probable, upon the face of the passage, to refer thewords, 'this is the true God,' to the antecedent 'him that is true,' and to consider the apostle as meaning to assert, that he that is true, whom he had just before mentioned, is the true Goo, nothing more being wanted, than the word 'God,' which is here supplied, to complete the description of him, which would otherwise have been left somewhat imperfect. The Apostle had not said that Jesus Christ was he that is true, but, on the contrary, that he was the son of him that is true, and therefore there is every reason for concluding, that he designed to call him that is true, whose son he had just before described Jesus Christ to be, the true God. He had before applied the word true, to him, and no one else, and now he completes the description, by calling him the true God. Nor is it to be supposed, that the Apostle, when he wrote this text, had quite forgotten, that our Lord himself, in one of the conversations, which he the Apostle had himself recorded in his own gospel, (John xvii. 3.) had expressly declared, that his Father was the ONLY true God, which seems to me to be quite irrefragable.

It appears likewise in my judgment, that one part of the passage refers chiefly to a person, namely to him that is true, who is described to be the Father, in words too plain to be mistaken, and another part of it to a thing, or state, namely, the being in him by Jesus Christ. Then follow the words, 'this is the true God and eternal life,' meaning he that is true is the true God, and being in him by Jesus Christ is eternal life. This gives a clear, consistent, and rational interpretation, free from every difficulty, and perfectly in unison with the declaration of our Lord himself, as given by the same Evangelist John xvii. 3. above referred to.

I must not however omit to notice, that Griesbach,

though he does not reject the words, Inoov Xeiotov, marks them as doubtful, stating the evidence for this opinion, and if they are not genuine, autou, which refers to the Father, will be the next antecedent. To Griesbach's doubts of the genuineness of the words, Inow Xelotov, I must add the fact, that no writer before the Council of Nice interprets the words, 'this is the true God,' as denoting Christ. Now, though I lay no stress upon all this, yet it is impossible to avoid observing, that even if there were no such reasons as I have assigned against the Trinitarian construction of the verse, as it now stands, a doubtful text would be no authority, for a doctrine so marvellous, and extraordinary, as that of the Trinity. You, my friend, I admit, have been too cautious to quote it. I have introduced it merely because I consider it connected with, and confirming, John xvii. 3. the text you have noticed, and as proving, in conjunction with it, that the Father alone is, and that the Son is not, the true God with the rest of the state of the state

After remarking, as is very true, that I think 1 Cor. viii. 4—6 decisive in my favour, you add, "Yet you would not admit, that when the Apostle asserts to us, that there is but one Lord, Jesus Christ, he excludes the Father from Lordship over us, for you would say he means only to exclude the false Lords of the heathen whom he had just mentioned. I ask for no other than such an explanation of the preceding words, 'to us there is but one God the Father.'"

Now here, my friend, you mistake me entirely. I certainly contend, that when the Apostle declares verse 4, that there is no other God but one, and verse 6, that to us there is but one God, and tells us who that God is, that is the Father, this stands absolute, and excludes all other persons, whether Pagan Gods or any other persons whomsoever. In my opinion, whenever a Christian uses the expression, 'unto us there is but one God,' he must be understood to make use of it absolutely, and not merely in opposition to the particular Gods of the persons he may happen to be conversing with, or to any particular Gods who may have been spoken of, or alluded to. If the Apostle Paul could be supposed to have addressed himself to the Corinthian idolators, and to have said to them, You Corinthians have many Gods, Jupiter, Juno, Apollo, Minerva, &c., but unto us Christians there is but one God, the Father, could any of them have supposed for an instant, that he did not intend to speak absolutely, in exclusion of all other Gods whomsoever; but only in opposition to Jupiter, Juno, Apollo, Minerva, and the other supposed Divinities adored by themselves; or have imagined, if they had ever heard of Thor, Woden, Bramah, Sceva, Vishnu, or any other deities of the Saxons or Indians, who did not happen to be then mentioned or alluded to, that they were not to be excluded; or that the Apostle intended to leave it uncertain whether the Christians might not have other Gods

of their own, besides the Father? Considering therefore the Apostle's expression, 'unto to us there is but one God, the Father,' to stand absolute, and to exclude all other persons whomsoever from being God; it follows that I cannot believe Jesus Christ to be God, consistently with the Apostle's declaration. When therefore he declares immediately after, that unto us there is but one Lord, and states who that Lord is, namely Jesus Christ, every person but Jesus Christ is also excluded from being Lord to us, and we have only to inquire what is meant by the term Lord, as applied to him, and in what sense it is so applied. It will be necessary to go but a very little way to ascertain this, for we have it from the mouth of the Apostle Peter, Acts ii. 36. that he was a delegated Lord, appointed by the Father. His words are, "Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God, o Osoc, hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord, and Christ;" and by verse 31. it appears, that God here spoken of was the Father. So in Philipp. ii. 9, 11, St. Paul informs us, that God hath highly exalted Christ, and given him a name which is above every name, that every tongue should confess, that he is Lord, and to whose glory? To his own? No. To the glory of God the Father, meaning clearly, as the person who had appointed and made him Lord. I therefore not only admit, but maintain, that when the Apostle asserts, that to us there is but one Lord, or Master, as the

word xugios is frequently rendered, he had in view Jesus Christ, and Jesus Christ only, as that one Lord, that is, as a delegated Lord among men in things spiritual, by the Father's appointment, and did not mean to include, either the Father, who had made him such Lord, or any of the Lords or Masters of any people or sect whatever, whether Jew or Gentile.

It is evident, that the word zueios, here used, which is translated Lord or Master, does not mean God, for that word had been made use of but just before, and applied to the Father, and not to Christ, and this is used immediately after, as if of secondary importance, and applied to Christ; but to whomsoever it applied, it must have meant some other person than God, and I need not remind you, that every other person than God must be infinitely inferior to God. It could not have meant Lord or Master in temporal things, because in such things Christians are commanded to acknowledge the authority, and submit to the lawful commands of the powers that be. It must therefore have meant Lord or Master in spiritual things. Now the Corinthian idolaters of that day had many Lords or Masters in spiritual things, under their Gods, who had just before been spoken of. They had one Lord or Master under Jupiter, in the priest of Jupiter, another under Juno, in the priest of Juno, another under Apollo, in the priest of Apollo, and another under Minerva, in the priest of Minerva. This brings us at once to the meaning of the phrase, and a beauti-

ful, and well connected meaning it is, namely, that they having many Gods, had many spiritual Lords or Masters under their Gods, and that we Christians, having but one God, namely, the Father, have but one Lord or Master in spiritual things under ours. Our God, namely the Father, being also the one only God, the term, when applied to him, is capable of being used absolutely to the exclusion of all others, and being the only God, he might, and as we are told in Scripture did, appoint only one Lord or Master in spiritual things under him, that is Christ, and he being the only one invested with that character, the term was capable of being applied to him likewise absolutely, to the exclusion of all others. When we have once ascertained what is the meaning of the term, it is perfectly clear, that unto us Christians there is but one Lord or Master, but one person of this description, that is Jesus Christ, and we are frequently commanded to recognise no other.

If the word Lord, however, was to be understood, not in the sense which the Apostle gives to it, but in a more general and indefinite sense, I should consider myself well entitled to say, that the case of the Father, whose authority is original and supreme, and that of the Son, whose power is delegated and limited, are not at all similar, and quote, as perfectly applicable, the Apostle Paul's words 1 Cor. xv. 27, shewing that the Father must always upon such occasions be considered to be excepted, which are, "But when he saith

all things are put under him," that is Christ, "it is manifest, that he is excepted, who did put all things under him." Now if we look only to the 24th verse of the same chapter, we shall find, that he who is excepted is the Father and the Father only. So that, according to the Apostle's view, the Father must upon all such occasions be understood to be excepted, as a thing of course, whether it be mentioned or not. But let me ask you, when the sole sovereignty, the sole Godhead of the Father is mentioned, when it is said in so many parts of Scripture, that there is none beside him, none equal to him, none like him, none to be compared to him, how it is that there is no such exception to be found, no not one, in favour of the Son, the supposed second person in the Trinity, or in favour of the Holy Spirit, the supposed third person in the Trinity, and, what is not a little curious, in this very passage, where the Father is expressly excepted, the Holy Spirit is not, nor is any notice taken of it, so that if it were a person, he would be one of the things put by the Father under Jesus Christ, which renders it evident, that the Apostle had never heard of its being such, nor of any such doctrine as that of the Trinity.

So when, after adverting to the many false Gods of the heathens, chap. viii. 4, he was expressly speaking of the God of the Christians, and declaring to his Corinthian brethren who he was, would he, if he had not been an Unitarian himself, have expressed him-

self exactly as the Unitarians do, and as every Unitarian would, "Unto us there is but one God, the Father?" Would he, if he had been a Trinitarian, have contented himself with naming as their God one of the persons only of whom the Trinitarian God is supposed to consist, and telling them that that was their God, leaving them quite in the dark as to the existence of any other person necessary to constitute him such, though he knew all the while, not only that he consisted of two other coequal and coeternal persons, as well as the Father, but that it was essential to their salvation, that they should know and believe it too? A mode of proceeding calculated entirely to mislead them, and to make them, what I contend they were, all Unitarians. Would he not, if he had been a Trinitarian, have said to them fairly, and bona fide, at once, as every Trinitarian would upon such an occasion, 'Unto us there is but one God, the Father Son and Spirit, who are one?' But this he never does, nor any thing like it, either here, or in any other place. . more countries and the state of the

I quoted Dr. Doddridge, who with other commentators considered the phrase, 'ascending up into Heaven,' to be figurative, and not to mean a local ascent, first, because being a Trinitarian, he was likely to feel no bias on my side of the question, and secondly, because it appeared to me to be necessary so to consider it, in order to render it consistent with other parts of Scripture; but it does not follow, that I must

therefore, agreeably to your recommendation, adopt another interpretation which I find there, namely, that by heavenly things is to be understood, inter alia, the eternal generation of the Son, for which he has produced neither authority nor argument, and for which it does not appear that there is the slightest reason of any kind.

But as this subject is once more before me, I shall add another proof from the 6th chapter of St. John, to those I have already furnished you with, p. 95, that 'ascending up into Heaven,' and 'coming down from Heaven,-cannot be understood to mean a literal and local ascent, or descent; but must be taken figuratively throughout. Our Lord says, verse 51, "I am the living bread which came down from Heaven. If any one shall eat of this bread, he shall live for ever, and the bread which I will give is my flesh, for the life of the world." Again, verse 56. "He who eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him." And finally, verse 58, "This is the bread which came down from Heaven. Not as your fathers did eat manna, and are dead. He who eateth of this bread shall live for ever." Is it not obvious that the whole passage is figurative? Will any one venture to assert, that at the time our Lord uttered this discourse, his flesh had ever been in Heaven? But if we interpret literally, and locally, our Lord's words, John iii. 13, "No one hath ascended up into Heaven, but he who came down from Heaven, even the Son of man

who is in Heaven," will they be true? Did not Elijah ascend up into Heaven? But if on the other hand we explain them figuratively, remembering that our Lord was then speaking of the new dispensation, which had been just revealed to him, and to him only, in all its parts, as he was to publish it to mankind, by God who had sent him forth amongst them for that purpose, interpret his declaration, that no one had ascended up into Heaven, to signify, that no one but himself had been admitted into, and made acquainted with, the Divine counsels with respect to this dispensation as it was to be promulgated by him for the benefit of the human race, there will be neither contradiction, nor difficulty. But whether we adopt this, which I place no reliance upon, or any other figurative explanation of the passage, which any one else may think better adapted to it, it is quite plain, that it cannot be taken literally; and if 'ascending up into Heaven' cannot be taken literally, as meaning a local ascent, so neither can its co-relative 'coming down from Heaven,' as signifying a local descent: but if 'ascending up into Heaven' means being admitted into, and made acquainted with, the counsels of God with respect to the Gospel dispensation, 'coming down from Heaven' may, as has been very judiciously remarked, signify the bringing them down and publishing them to the world. We have some illustration of the force of such expressions, in the first Chapter of this very Gospel, verse 6, where John having received a divine

revelation, and having been sent forth to publish it to the world, is said to have been a man sent from God, though it has never been supposed that he had ever been in any other world than this.

You quite mistake me, if you suppose, that I reject any of the existing creeds because they were held by Fathers and Councils. I reject them, first, because they contain doctrines not only not contained in, but contrary to, the Scriptures; and secondly, because I deny the authority of any uninspired men, or body of men whatever, to establish creeds as necessary to be believed by Christians. They have no warrant in the Scriptures for the exercise of such a power, and the creeds they have framed, have not only been contradictory and absurd, but have from age to age proved the sources of incalculable discord, misery and bloodshed. In this respect every Christian is, according to the best of his opportunity and ability, to examine and judge for himself, and is not bound to subscribe to the opinions of any other men, or body of men whatever. He has a right to stand fast in that liberty with which Christ has made him free, and to acknow? ledge no other master on earth, in his religious concerns, but him. If he chooses to unite with his brethren in Christian worship, he is entitled so to do, and no one can plead any authority from Christ, or his apostles, for throwing down such stumbling-blocks before him, as the creeds complained of. HIM IN The

That these creeds deserve the epithets I have ap-

plied to them, will appear on the first examination of their contents, of which I shall furnish two or three instances, which will be quite sufficient for this purpose. By the most ancient, which is called the Apostles' creed, but which the apostles had as little to do with the fabrication of, as ourselves, we are called upon to say, "I believe in God the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, and in Jesus Christ his only son our Lord," declaring him to be the Son of God, the Father Almighty; which is strictly scriptural and proper: but this is instantly contradicted by the words immediately following, "who was conceived by the Holy Ghost," representing him to have been conceived by, and consequently to have been the Son of, the Holy Ghost, instead of the Son of the Father Almighty, as had but just before been alleged. There is no escaping from this dilemma, but either by saying, without any authority, that this relates to his human nature only, in which case he had two fathers, one for his supposed divine, and another for his human nature; or by acknowledging that the Holy Ghost is not a person, but only the power and energy of the Father himself: but this is abandoning the Trinity altogether. The words, "I believe in the Holy Ghost, the Holy Catholic church," and so on to the end, were added long after the fabrication of the former part of the creed.

The next is the Nicene creed, commencing with the clause, "I believe in God the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible," which is strictly scriptural. We shall see whether the clause following is of the same description. It is, "and in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God, begotten by his Father before all worlds, very God of very God, begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father, by whom all things were made;" meaning undeniably throughout, his supposed divine nature, the human nature not then having any existence; "who," meaning the divine nature, "for us men, and for our salvation, came down from heaven, and was incarnate by the Holy Ghost, of the Virgin Mary, and was made man, and," still meaning the divine nature, for such is the construction, there being no exception or intimation to the contrary, "was crucified for us under Pontius Pilate. He" (still meaning the divine nature as well as the rest) "suffered and was buried, and the third day he rose again, according to the Scriptures, and ascended into heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of the Father, and he shall come again with glory to judge both the quick and the dead, and whose kingdom shall have no end." Now where is there to be found in the Scriptures any thing like this? Alas for the lack of common sense, or common reflection, amongst the creed-makers of that period, who could represent the supposed divine nature of our Lord, that is, according to their ideas of him, the Almighty, eternal, immortal, and invisible God, to have been

crucified, DEAD AND BURIED!!! And how came they, when they affirmed that his kingdom should have no end, to forget that they were flatly contradicting St Paul, who says, 1 Cor. xv. 24, 25, "then cometh the END, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the FATHER, when he shall have put down all rule, and all authority, and power; for he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet;" and verse 28, "And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the son also himself be SUBJECT unto him that put all things under him, that God, & Ozos," meaning the Father, not only by the use of this appellation, which is applied absolutely to none but the Father, but by having expressly declared to us but just before, who God, & Osos, is, that is, even the Father, "may be all in all," shewing the complete termination of his kingdom, which the Nicene creed contradicts, by declaring that it shall have no end. The last clause says, "I believe in the Holy Ghost, the Lord and giver of life, who proceedeth from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified, who spake by the prophets." Can any one affirm this to be scriptural? In the first place it is hardly consistent with the first part of the creed, which represents the Father to have created all things: and consequently to have been the Lord and giver of life to all his creatures, to call the Holy Ghost the Lord and giver of life, which no such person is declared to be in Scripture: secondly, the

Holy Ghost is never said in the Scriptures to be worshiped or glorified by any one, or at all, much less to be worshiped and glorified together with the Father: and thirdly, in the Epistle to the Hebrews i. 1, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ is stated to have been he who spake by the Prophets, and therefore if they are even said to have been moved, or influenced, by the Holy Spirit, it must have been by the Holy Spirit of the Father, or, in other words, by the Father himself, who alone is referred to, and declared to be a Spirit, John iv. 24. and not another person, called the Holy Spirit. Numerous are the instances in the Scriptures of the Spirit of God being put for God himself, as well as the Spirit of a man, for the man himself.

Last of all comes that strange composition called the Creed of St. Athanasius, with its unscriptural and damnatory clauses, which has no prototype or similitude in any part of the sacred writings, and which no one will now venture to say ever proceeded from the pen of St. Athanasius,—a creed which many of the most eminent and learned men of all parties, including Archbishop Tillotson, have for the last two centuries wished us well rid of, and which in the United States of America was many years ago, upon deliberate examination, struck out, as wholly unscriptural and indefensible.

This document opens a wide field for remark, if it were necessary, or convenient. I shall content myself

however with a single observation. The author, without the slightest foundation in Scripture, informs his reader, that it is necessary to everlasting salvation, that he should believe rightly the incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ; but does not condescend to inform him, in any part of the creed, what the incarnation is, nor how it is to be believed, in order that he may obtain that everlasting salvation, which, he gravely tells him, depends upon his right belief of it; but after some propositions not easy to be understood, relative to our Saviour's supposed composition, which are likewise wholly without warrant in Scripture, a few sentences further on informs him, that our Lord is one Christ, not by the conversion of the Godhead into the flesh, but by the taking of the manhood into God, which is an Indeation, if I may once more use the term, and the very contrary to an incarnation!

Towards the close of your Letter, you have recourse to observations very common with persons entertaining your sentiments, when they feel themselves pressed by reasons which they find it difficult to answer, "that you did not expect by mere argument to reconcile me to the divinity of Christ, and the Trinity, with the other doctrines which are connected with them; for that you well know, that fact confirms, what the Scriptures fully testify, that the reception of these sentiments, so as to render them vital and efficacious, depends upon a certain state of mind, produced by the

Holy Spirit; yet as religion is a reasonable service, and the obligation to receive these truths arises from their being revealed with sufficient evidence, you deem it a duty to present that evidence where you have an opportunity, yet you say you should expect more effect from one glimpse of our true condition before God as guilty and deprayed, than from ten thousand arguments, though delivered by Logic herself and enforced by all the powers of eloquence."

It seems extraordinary to me, that it should never once have occurred to you, that all that is advanced in this passage rests upon mere assumption, a petitio principii, from the beginning to the end. Where, my good friend, do the Scriptures speak of the divinity of Christ, or of the Trinity at all? You have not yet favoured me with any reference to them, which proves either the one or the other. I should be much indebted to you if you could inform me where the Scriptures fully testify, that the reception of the doctrines of the divinity of Christ, and of the Trinity, so as to render them vital and efficacious, depends upon a certain state of mind produced by the Holy Spirit. Where do the Scriptures represent these doctrines as truths? Where do they reveal them with sufficient evidence to render the belief of them obligatory upon us, or in fact reveal them to us at all? Why should you suppose that none but persons of your persuasion have a single glimpse of their true condition before

n Joona Emoit

God, as guilty and depraved? Is the Calvinist so uncharitable, as to suppose that no Christian walks humbly with his God but himself?

Most happily we are not obliged to obtain just views of our true state and condition by peeps and glimpses. Thanks be to that gracious Being who hath dealt so bountifully with us, the sun of Righteousness has risen, and has poured a flood of light around us. In Christianity every thing necessary to make us wise unto salvation is placed in broad day-light, and open sunshine; and we have nothing to do but to open our eyes wide, and look about us, to see our course marked out distinctly and clearly for us; but we are too apt to prefer the darkness of Mystery, to the light of Revelation, to like most, what we understand least, to prefer groping our way about by the dim rush-light of our own invention, in gloom of our own making, instead of walking with security in the bright radiance, and under the benign influence, of that glorious luminary, which shines with so much splendour round us. tilago vinistes yet l'abier ylangues

I have perused the Letter of Dr. Stock, to which you refer me, and find that he does not support his change of opinion either by reason or Scripture, but founds it principally upon internal feelings, which are of one description in one man, and of another, and perhaps totally different, in another, and by which multitudes of delusive systems incapable of any rational proof, and often diametrically opposite to each

other, have in almost every age of Christianity been attempted to be established.

How you can imagine the two supposed first chapters of St. Matthew to be confirmed by the two supposed first chapters of St Luke, is inconceivable to me. I think I have demonstrated in the preceding parts of this Letter, as well as in my former ones, that they are completely at war with each other, and that it is impossible to reconcile them.

I must not conclude, however, without noticing the representation you make of your peculiar sentiments, as one of those persons who denominate themselves Evangelical; and the comparison you draw between your system, and that of the Unitarians, though, as you have rather censured some of the latter for their supposed appropriation to themselves of the word Unitarian, I must rally you and your friends a little, upon your assumption of that of Evangelical, which I cannot do better, than in the words of a very eminent and learned person now no more, who, speaking of you as a body, said, They certainly ought not to be called Evangelical, but Epistolarians, for there is not a word of their peculiar doctrines to be found in the Gospels, their whole system being built upon a misconception of the meaning of a few detached passages in the Epistles. and di noing control by

I am aware, that though the great body of Christians in this country have not embraced your tenets, yet you are a very numerous and respectable body,

and I should be sorry to give offence to any of you, which I shall certainly never do personally, whatever I may be thought to do through the medium of your opinions, which I am obliged to animadvert upon, and contrast, with those of the Unitarians, in consequence of the representations you have made of the latter, in comparison with the former.

You tell me "that you are afflicted at what I say concerning my confident conclusion in favour of what are called Unitarian sentiments, for that they appear to you, to leave a creature who has sinned, and broken his maker's laws, without a foundation on which he can stand at the tribunal of his judge; that the atonement which the Scriptures declare to be the grand design of Christ's coming, requires the divinity of Christ, that it may satisfy divine Justice; and that if I could disprove the divinity and atonement of Christ, I should only prove, that we had our religion to seek, for that that of the Scriptures could not meet the necessities of fallen man."

This passage furnishes another melancholy instance of the manner in which the sacred writings are incautiously appealed to, for what they do not contain. Where, my dear Sir, do the Scriptures declare the atonement to be the grand design of Christ's coming? and where do you find, that any such atonement requires the divinity of Christ, that it may satisfy divine justice? Such assertions have without scruple been echoed from one body of divines to another, till

they are supposed to be verity itself; but the Scriptures, to which the appeal is so confidently made, contain no such declarations. There happens to be no such word as atonement in the whole of the New Testament, except in the common version. There it is to be met with once only, and in that single instance is a mistranslation of the Greek word zatallayn, which is upon every other occasion, without any exception, rendered reconciliation, which, as is very remarkable, is always used to denote the reconciliation of man to God, and not the reconciliation of God to man, and consequently is the reverse of what would be required by your doctrine of atonement.

Nothing can be more curious than the fact, that this very passage in the Epistle to the Romans chap. v. ver. 10, 11. in which the word zαταλλαγην is mistranslated 'atonement,' instead of 'reconciliation,' is subversive of the modern doctrine of the Atonement. The words are, "For if when we were enemies, we were reconciled (καταλλαγημεν) to God by the death of his Son, much more being reconciled (zαταλλαγενres), we shall be saved by his life, and not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the reconciliation (zara). λαγην)." Here the very same word is used in the very same passage three times, in the two former of which it is rendered 'reconciled,' and reconciliation is the subject; and yet where it stands in the third place, the common version, without any cause, or any authority,

renders it atonement \*; which cannot possibly be the meaning; and, if it were, would be destructive of the Calvinistic doctrine, for it would represent man, instead of God, to have received the atonement. But it would be preposterous to suppose, that an atonement was to be made to, or received by, the guilty and rebellious party. When it was made under the law, for offences committed against God, as the sovereign of the Israelitish nation, which was principally for ceremonial offences, and never in any case where the offender had committed offences punishable with death, it was made by the offending and rebellious subject, to God his king, in the form of a present or offering, as a token of his contrition, and return to his duty and allegiance to his Sovereign; but by whomsoever the offering was made, it was never received by the offender himself, but by the priest who represented God the Sovereign. I lay no stress however upon this, it being quite sufficient for me to shew, that the word zαταλλαγην ought to have been translated 'reconciliation, which takes away all pretence for considering the passage an authority for the doctrine of the Atonement. The strange notion, that every offence committed against an infinite Being, is an infinite offence, and requires an infinite satisfaction, or infinite punishment, though it may be found in the regions of poetry, in Milton's Paradise Lost for instance, receives

<sup>\*</sup> The Vulgate renders it reconciliationem.

no sanction from the Holy Scriptures, and as little from reason and common sense. How can the offences of a finite creature be infinite? A finite being cannot possess infinite powers. His powers, like himself, must be limited and finite, as we know the powers of all the human race to be. His acts consequently, not being capable of exceeding his powers, must be finite also, and every offence he commits must be, either the doing of some act which he ought not to have done, which act must necessarily be within his powers and be finite, or the neglecting to do some act which he ought to have done, and which must also be an act within his powers, and be a finite act likewise, the neglecting to do which must be the finite neglect of a finite creature, and consequently cannot constitute. an infinite offence. of the blicky reas sandards des new

It is said, that the offence being committed against an infinite Being, partakes of his nature and becomes infinite, as an offence against a King in this world is a greater offence than one committed against a subject; but independently of there not being any thing to be found in Scripture about infinite offences, the whole is a fallacy. The acts of an infinite being may partake of his nature and be infinite; but the acts of a finite being, against whomsoever directed, cannot partake of the nature of another person from whom they do not emanate, but must partake of his own nature, and be within the extent of his powers, and consequently be finite. If every act of disobedience

to the Supreme Being were infinite, every act of obedience, every act of prayer and praise to him by finite and limited mortals, must be infinite likewise, and, shocking and absurd as it would be, ought to be called so. But what should we think of a man who should seriously tell us, that he had heard one person make an infinite prayer, another person sing an infinite hymn to, and a third person preach an infinite sermon in honour of, the Supreme Being?

It is not true, that all offences committed against Sovereigns are greater, or are more severely punished, than such as are committed against subjects. If a child were to steal a gooseberry out of a king's garden, we should be horrified if we were told that he was sentenced to be hanged, drawn and quartered for it: yet how many believe, that the Supreme Being, the Father of mercies and the God of all consolation, would inflict upon the unhappy culprit, for the very same offence, unutterable torments in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone to all eternity, unless an infinite satisfaction were made for it!

Attempts against the *life*, or the *throne*, of an earthly monarch are undoubtedly considered greater offences, and visited with more severe punishment, than any offences against his subjects. But why? Because by such attempts the one may be destroyed and the other overthrown, and possibly the whole nation ruined. But the KING OF KINGS, the mighty Maker of the Universe, holds *his* existence and au-

thority by no such precarious tenure. Nothing that can be done by all, or any of his creatures, can in the least endanger Him, or defeat the most inconsiderable of his purposes. The rage of the nations against Him he laughs to scorn, and holds them in the highest derision, making all their impotent efforts contribute to the fulfilment of his great designs, and the accomplishment of the gracious purposes of his sovereign will.

I shall proceed to inquire, which of the two systems, the supposed Evangelical, or the Unitarian, leaves a creature who has sinned, and broken his maker's laws, without a foundation on which he can stand at the tribunal of his judge, and which of them is best calculated to meet the necessities of fallen man.

According to the supposed Evangelical or Calvinistic system, the great and glorious Author of all things, who is represented to us in the Scriptures in terms of the highest majesty, and at the same time of the greatest simplicity, as a Being who is one and his name one, as a Being infinitely and universally benevolent, as the Father and the Friend of the whole human race, is by the followers of Calvin described to us as a compound Deity, a triune God, enshrined in MYSTERY, and held up to us in characters, which would compel us, if we believed them, to consider him upon the whole, to be an unjust, malignant, and cruel Divinity; for by this system he is represented, as having from all eternity predestinated the great

mass of his intelligent creatures to most exquisite, and never ending torments, which he foresaw before he created them, and well knowing it, thought fit, notwithstanding, to call them into existence; as having made our first parent Adam, and placed him in the garden of Eden, in which was every thing calculated to promote his happiness, and having there entered into a covenant with him, which he knew he would never fulfil, by virtue of which he, our first parent, engaged on his part, for perfect obedience to all his maker's commandments, under the penalty of death, and everlasting misery, to himself and all his posterity, if he did not perform it; and the Supreme Being promised him on his part, eternal life and happiness, as a reward for his obedience and service. Such a covenant as this, I will venture to say, that no wise, or good being would have entered into himself, or have permitted a raw and inexperienced creature, whom he had just created from the dust of the ground, to have entered into on the other part, even for himself only, much less for countless millions of his future offspring, who were not then in existence, and consequently could have had no knowledge, option, will, or choice, whatsoever.

What should we say in a court of law or equity, of a covenant made by a very inexperienced young man on one side, for perfect and perpetual obedience, with a person of mature age, and great wisdom and expe-

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rience, on the other side, by which the latter, in consideration of such service, held up to the dazzled imagination of the former, a bright and glittering prize, namely eternal life and happiness, which he the promiser, and he only, knew all the while, would turn up a most dreadful blank, entailing death and ruin upon the deluded wretch, who had unwarily entered into this fatal contract with him, and upon all his posterity, and eternal misery upon the great majority, consisting of multitudes almost without number, of the latter? What upright judge would hesitate a moment to set it aside, as most fraudulent and wicked? And who could avoid pronouncing, that the poor inexperienced creature, who had been thus tempted hastily to enter into it, had been completely taken in ? I tody, was of emitter live Land that theney.

But, as if this were not sufficient, the Calvinistic system represents an infernal spirit, of extraordinary power, subtlety, sagacity, and malignity, long practised in all the arts of fraud and delusion, to have been let loose upon our unhappy and inexperienced ancestor, without any intimation that he was to be exposed to the wily artifices of such an adversary; and that this invisible agent, entering into or taking the form of a serpent, commenced his infernal machinations, by tempting the wife of our great progenitor, who must have been quite as raw and inexperienced a being as himself, and probably still less

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firm, and less capable of resisting the artifices of such a secret and unknown enemy.

This spirit of darkness is represented as having been long at war with Omnipotence, and as having entered into this world for the express purpose of defeating his intention, of making the human race happy; and he is further represented as having actually succeeded, and as to the greater part of mankind,—monstrous, and utterly incredible and irrational, as the idea is,—to have really got the better of the Almighty, by bringing upon them irretrievable, and everlasting ruin; thus verifying the prediction which our countryman Milton puts into his mouth, that "he more than half perhaps would reign"!!!

Would it not be a gross libel upon the Majesty on High, to say, with the advocates of this system, that he appointed our first parent a trustee for thousands of millions of his descendants, and made him the depositary of their future happiness, when he knew from the beginning, that he was utterly unfit for the trust, and would upon the first temptation, be guilty of such a breach of it, as would entail death and never-ending misery, upon the greater part of them?

What would be our feelings, even if we were not parties concerned, for his unconscious and unfortunate offspring, who could know nothing of the fatal engagement thus ignorantly and inconsiderately entered into on their behalf by their unhappy first parent, which was to doom them to hopeless and everlasting

woe, without any possibility of escape? for they are represented by this extraordinary system, as being in consequence of a single act of disobedience on the part of their great ancestor, introduced into the world tainted with his sin, rotten to the very core, and wholly unable to do any thing to extricate themselves from this most lamentable condition, whilst he, who alone can help them, chooses to extend his favour only to a few, and leaves all the rest, that is, thousands of millions of his intelligent offspring, the work of his own hands, without scruple to their melancholy and most distressing fate.

Nor is this all, for the system holds him forth as calling to these unhappy victims to look unto him and be saved, to turn from their evil ways and live, as willing that all men should be saved, that he sent his son to be the Saviour of the world; and his son, as having died for ALL, and having commanded his Gospel to be preached to every creature, which upon their principles is the greatest mockery and delusion that could have been practised, holding as they do, that not a single person can obey the call, not one human being avail himself of these gracious offers, unless he be previously elected, and irresistibly impelled to it by a superior power, which the great mass of mankind are not to be. To call therefore upon persons thus circumstanced, to work impossibilities, is like calling upon the blind to see, the deaf to hear, and the lame to run, though they are entirely without

the power so to do, and are not to have it communicated to them: or calling upon a prisoner to quit his dungeon, when we know that we ourselves have caused every door to be locked upon him, and his feet to be made fast in the stocks.

If such a Being as this, be not pure malignity, because he vouchsafes to save a few, who can help saying that malignity is the predominant and prevailing feature in his character? The fabled divinity of antiquity, who is stated to have devoured his own offspring, was mercy itself compared to this imaginary monster of more modern times; for such as were made the victims of his cruelty by the former, were put out of their pains at once, whilst the great mass of the devoted and miserable descendants of Adam, are, according to the Calvinistic system, doomed to suffer the most excruciating torments for ever and ever, without hope, and without end.

The supposed sanguinary Divinity of ancient times likewise, had a motive, such as it was, for his cruelties. He believed an ancient prophecy, by which it was foretold, that his kingdom should be overthrown, and his authority destroyed by one of his own sons. But the real God of us Christians, the Omnipotent and Omniscient, blessed be his name, could have no such motive. His throne is never for one moment in danger; his designs can never be frustrated; his counsel that shall stand; and he will do all his pleasure. He knows every design against him before it is formed,

and by a single exertion of his power can confound the devices, and paralyse the efforts, of all his rebellious subjects: nay, by the merely withholding for an instant, the exercise of his mighty energies, in whom they live, move, and have their being, he would involve them in sudden destruction, and blot them for ever out of existence. To fancy that a Being so transcendently great and glorious as this, whose favourite attribute too, is infinite benevolence, who represents himself to us as love itself, can have predestinated a vast majority of his rational offspring whom he created with capacities for the enjoyment of happiness, to everlasting misery, is in my judgement the greatest absurdity that ever entered the human mind, and, as I have observed already, a most gross libel upon him.

What should we say of a human father, who, if he had the power, should thus treat his children? what of a human sovereign, who should act with such refined and unexampled cruelty towards his subjects; should we not hold him up to public detestation, as a most horrible and execrable tyrant? Would fallen creatures who had sinned and broken the laws of such a being as this, have any foundation on which they could stand at his tribunal? Would not innumerable multitudes of them, notwithstanding the supposed atonement, be hurried from thence to everlasting torment? Would this system, if it were true, be calculated to meet the wants and wishes of fallen man? Would not, on the contrary, the Gospel itself, instead

of being, as its name imports and as it really is, "good news," be the most melancholy piece of intelligence that was ever published to the human race?

According to the Calvinistic system also, the Supreme Father and Lord of all, presents himself to us likewise in the character of a hard unfeeling creditors who, though he knows that his unhappy debtors have nothing to pay, will not abate an iota of his full demand, but wrings to the last farthing of his debt out of a third person, who offers to pay it for a few, leaving all the rest to endure the horrors of perpetual imprisonment.

Upon this system too, his mistaken votaries deny to him the power of pardoning offences committed against himself, which is enjoyed by the meanest earthly sovereigns, and justly considered as one of the most valuable, as well as most amiable of all their prerogatives, and pretend that he, the Almighty and everlasting King of the Universe alone, cannot do it without injustice, until full satisfaction has been made to him, until the entire punishment merited by each offence, has been inflicted upon, and borne by somebody, and this they call mercy and forgiveness, when nothing in fact has been forgiven, nothing left unpunished; but the punishment, which if imposed at all, ought to have fallen upon the guilty, is inflicted upon the innocent; to the utter subversion of all justice and example, of all the ends and designs of punishment, and remains so, notwithstanding the innocent victim submits to it voluntarily. What should we think of permitting a thief, or a murderer, to go unpunished, because some honest man should think fit to be transported, or hanged instead of him? But the supposed justice which requires, or allows all this, is entirely a justice of their own making, analogous to nothing which we find established among men, resembling nothing which we find ascribed to the Supreme Being in the Scriptures.

Yet this is the golden Image which Nebuchadnezzar has set up, which, when we hear the sound of the cornet, the flute, the harp, the sackbut, the psaltery, the dulcimer, and all kinds of music, we are required to fall down and worship. This is the God of Emperors, Popes, Councils, Synods, and Assemblies of Divines, to which they have contributed their several parts, and these are the features of his character, and the measures of his government.

But let us turn with horror from this grim Idol, and his cruel and vindictive attributes, and contrast with him,—for it is a contrast, and a most striking and happy one,—the God of Holy Writ, the Supreme Author of the Universe, and the bestower of every good and perfect gift, the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom, and to whom alone, the latter has commanded his followers to present their humble request is as the universal friend and Father of all. The Scriptures speak of this transcendently great, and infinitely benevolent Being, in such language as this;

"Seek ye Jehovah while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near. Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return to Jehovah, and he will have mercy upon him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon," Is. lv. 7. Not a word about punishing them, or any one else in their stead. It is sufficient for them to forsake their evil ways and thoughts, and return to him, to be abundantly PARDONED, which, if it means any thing, means a free pardon to all intents and purposes. Again, "I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for MINE OWN sake, and will not remember thy sins," Is. xliii. 25. "His anger endureth but for a moment," Ps. xxx. 5. "The Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger and plenteous in mercy. He will not always chide, neither will he keep his anger for ever," Ps. ciii. 8.9. "The Lord is gracious, and full of compassion, slow to anger, and of great mercy. The Lord is good to ALL, and his tender mercies are over ALL his works." Ps. cxlv. 8, 9.

But what says the popular system, the creature of philosophers, priests, and councils? Not a word of this is true. Instead of being plenteous in mercy, and abounding in forgiveness, the Supreme Being forgives no sins. He pardons no iniquities. Every offence must be visited with its full punishment. His anger endureth for ever, and will burn throughout all the endless ages of eternity. He is not good to all, nor are his tender mercies over all his works; but on the

contrary, to the great majority of his intelligent offspring, to thousands of millions of human beings, he is not good, but full of wrath and fury for ever; nor are his tender mercies over them who constitute so great a part of his works, nor are they ever intended so to be; so that it would have been better, infinitely better for them, if he had never called them into existence: yet these are the doctrines palmed upon us by the contrivance of men, as the doctrines of the Holy Scriptures, and we are represented as making ourselves wise above that which is written, because we reject them with abhorrence, as libels upon our great and merciful Creator; because we find them as contrary to Scripture, as they are to pure and unsocritish and gradients, Elmyrtto L phisticated reason.

The language of our Saviour Christ in the New Testament, is to the very same effect as that of the Prophets in the Old, representing his Father and our Father, his God and our God, to be a God full of goodness and mercy, a God who actually forgives transgressions and sins, and commands us to be merciful, as he is merciful, to pray to him that he will forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us, which we are not to do by receiving complete satisfaction for them from some one else, for that would be no forgiveness at all; and to tell those who had offended us afterwards, that we had forgiven them, would be downright hypocrisy and insult. Our Lord plainly informs us that if we forgive

men their trespasses, our heavenly Father will also forgive us. When asked what a man must do to inherit eternal life, he tells the inquirer at once, that he must love the Lord his God with all his heart, with all his soul, with all his mind, and with all his strength, and his neighbour as himself, and does not trouble him with any of the subtleties and refinements adopted in later ages. If the doctrines of the infinite satisfaction and atonement, had been essential and fundamental parts of the Gospel, so essential that the salvation of mankind entirely depended upon them, as they are represented to be by the Calvinists, would not our blessed Lord have known it as well as they, and would that great teacher whose office it was to publish that Gospel to the world, and to inform mankind what they should believe and practise under it, have been quite silent upon the subject as he has been, for he never once mentions it? Would he have inculcated again and again, many of the minor duties of Christianity, and have left these essential and fundamental parts, without believing which, his followers could not be saved, wholly untouched? Was this his practice, or the practice of any person who ever professed to be the teacher of any important doctrine whatever?

The language of our Lord's Apostles is also in perfect unison with his own, and that of the Prophets in the Old Testament, representing the Supreme Being to be Love itself, 1 John, iv. 8; to be a God who will

have all men to be saved, 1 Tim. ii. 4; and if HE wills it, what shall oppose itself to his high will, who is possessed of Almighty power to carry into effect all his purposes, and infinite wisdom to accomplish them in the best manner, and by the best means? Has he not declared of himself, "My counsel that shall stand, and I will fulfil all my pleasure"? Can any thing prevent HIS sovereign will from receiving its full and glorious consummation?

In 1 Tim. iv. 10. we are further informed that the living God is the Saviour of ALL men, especially of those that believe, shewing plainly, that he is the Saviour of unbelievers, as well as of believers, but especially of the latter. Will any one contend, in contradiction to this, that the former will not at some time or other, come to the knowledge of his truth, as he says, 1 Tim. ii. 4, that all men shall, but that they who are the great majority of men shall be ultimately cast away and lost for ever?

It is very remarkable too, that the first testimony which was borne to our Lord as a divine messenger, was by John the Baptist in these words, John i. 29. "Behold the Lamb of God who taketh away the sin of the world," which no one was ever authorized to contradict, by saying that he shall take away the sin of only part of the world, though modern divines say so without hesitation every day.

In addition to the above, if further proof be required, the Apostle Paul tells us expressly, that Christ

died for all, 2 Cor. v. 14, 15; that as in Adam all died, so in Christ shall all be made alive, 1 Cor. xv. 22; and that this does not mean merely being raised to life and consciousness, to be condemned to eternal torment, he plainly shews in his Epistle to the Romans, chap. v., where he states, that not as the offence, so also is the free GIFT, "for if through the offence of one the many," so is the original, "be dead, much more the grace or favour of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto the many," that is the very same many, the mass of mankind, who through the offence of one, had died. So he says afterwards, "Therefore as by the offence of one, judgment came upon all men unto condemnation, even so by the righteousness of one, the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life;" the very same all men upon whom judgment came to condemnation; for he continues, "As by one man's disobedience, the many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one, shall the many be made righteous, that is the very same many who had been made sinners, the mass of mankind, shall at some time or other be made righteous. But how can this be, if they are to pass a whole eternity in a state of sin, unrighteousness and enmity to God, and of unutterable torments?

The Apostle however does not stop here, for he proceeds thus: "Moreover the law entered, that the offence might abound; but where sin abounded, grace

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did much more abound." Now where did sin abound but amongst the great body of mankind, the whole human race? Consequently, if grace is extended only to a few of them, and the great majority are abandoned to eternal sin and misery, sin will have abounded much more than grace. Where sin abounded, grace will not have much more abounded, nor as much; because amongst the great majority, amongst thousands of millions, where sin hath abounded, grace will not have abounded, nor ever will abound at all.

But why, where sin had abounded, did grace much more abound? The Apostle's answer is, "that as sin had reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness, unto eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord;" so that, according to the Apostle's account, where sin had abounded, which was amongst all men, grace much more abounded, that as sin had reigned unto death, which was over all men, even so might grace reign, which must in like manner mean over all men, unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord; meaning that all men should in the end, by the grace or favour of God, receive eternal life by, or through the means of, Jesus Christ. In like manner, the Apostle, speaking of the Israelites, says, Rom. xi. 32, "For God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all," clearly shewing that God designs to have mercy upon all Israel without any exception; for though all are

concluded under unbelief, yet to the very same all, mercy is to be extended. He do you be a sufficient

There is undoubtedly to be a second death, a state of punishment for the disobedient and impenitent, who have not been reconciled to God in this world. But are they always to remain enemies? Is their punishment never to produce any salutary effect upon them? Is it to be wholly vindictive and not correctional; and are they never to be released from it, so that the second death shall last for ever? If that were the case, it would not only contradict what the Apostle has said above, but also what he tells us in his 1st Epistle to the Corinthians, chap. xv. 21-28, where he says, "For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection from the dead; for as in Adam all died, even so in Christ, shall all be made alive; but every man in his own order, Christ the first fruits, afterwards they that are Christ's at his coming: Afterwards cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father, when he shall have destroyed all rule, and all authority, and power; for he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy shall be destroyed, that is death, for he hath put all things under his feet. But when he saith all things are put under him, it is manifest that he is excepted who did put all things under him; and when all things shall be subjected unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that subjected all things to him, that God may be all in all."

From this passage it appears that Christ shall reign till he shall have destroyed all rule, and all authority and power that opposes him, till he shall have put under his feet, not destroyed, all enemies, till all things shall have been subjected to him, till death, the LAST enemy, shall have been destroyed, for it appears that that enemy, and that enemy only, is to be destroyed, that then our Lord is to deliver up the kingdom to God,  $\tau \varphi$  De $\varphi$ , even the Father, and to be subject to him who subjected all things to him, that God, become again, meaning the Father, not the Trinity, nor the Father, Son and Spirit, may be all in all.

But how can this be true, if there are to be thousands of millions of intelligent beings in a state of sin, rebellion, and enmity against God, for ever and ever? How can death be the last enemy, or how can the last enemy ever be destroyed, when there are to be, according to the Calvinistic system, so many millions of other enemies living, and continuing in enmity to God to all eternity? How can God ever be all in all, if there are to be so many millions of obdurate and enraged rebels, reviling him and cursing him for ever? If this were so, sin and death would last for ever, death would never be destroyed, nor would moral evil ever be annihilated, but would continue for ever to disfigure the works of God, and shew that his inten-

tions have been in great part frustrated, and that his loving kindness and tender mercies are not, as he has declared, over all his works.

Is it not then a more rational and consistent interpretation of this passage, that after the resurrection there will be a death, which is called elsewhere the second death, for the punishment of those, who having quitted the present state impenitent and unreformed, will rise again with the same vicious and rebellious habits and propensities, as they were under the dominion of in this world, and will require a long and severe course of discipline, to subdue and reform them, and so fully to impress their minds with the wickedness, folly, and dreadful consequences, of acting in disobedience to the commandments of God, their Father and their Friend, as to prevent them from ever returning to their evil practices; that Christ shall reign, till by the salutary, though severe measures of his administration, they shall all be completely subdued, and from enemies be converted into friends, and shall all have benefited by his mission; and that when all this shall have been accomplished, when the second death 'shall have answered all its purposes, and have left no other enemy existing, then that last enemy shall be destroyed, shall be finally put an end to, and Christ himself, having fulfilled all the objects of his mission, having died for all, and saved all, having, as it has been said of him, restored all things, shall deliver up

the kingdom to God, even the Father, that God may be all in all, and universal goodness, virtue, and happiness prevail for ever?

What a glorious and happy consummation will this be! How fully will it reconcile the ways of God to man, and convince us that all his attributes are in perfect unison with each other! Under this view of the Divine government, the Gospel is indeed good news to all mankind. It is the religion, and the only religion, that can be universal; the religion, and the only religion, which, to use your own words, gives to a creature who has sinned and broken his Maker's laws, a foundation on which he can stand at the tribunal of his judge; the religion, and the only religion, which can meet the necessities of fallen man, for it meets and completely provides for the necessities of them all, and is intended ultimately to make them all supremely and everlastingly happy.

It is the most beautiful, as well as beneficent system, that the warmest wishes of mankind could ever have aspired to, could they have formed a conception of it, before it descended from Him who is the Father of lights, and the giver of every good and perfect gift. Its nature and character designate it as having emanated from Him whose most distinguished attribute is universal benevolence, who delights to represent himself as Love itself, as the Father and Friend of all his rational offspring. How delightful is it to consider

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ourselves as living under the administration of such a glorious and beneficent Sovereign as this, who is continually pouring forth upon us a rich profusion of his bounties, who crowneth us with loving kindness and tender mercies, who is always watching over us for our good, and never even punishes us but for our own benefit! Whilst the warm glow of gratitude and devotion dilates our breasts, we can repose all our cares upon him who careth for us; and if any who are at present very near and dear to us, should wander from his ways, and notwithstanding our most ardent wishes and anxious endeavours to bring them back again to God and virtue, by going out of this world unreformed, render themselves the subjects of punishment in a future state, the desolating sense of despair on their account, which is the most distressing of all feelings, which we cannot experience for a moment without misery, can never invade our bosoms, because we know that every one of them shall at last, each in his own order, be made perfect through sufferings, and be advanced to a state of never-ending felicity, which will make the greatest sufferer of them all rejoice with joy unspeakable, that this gracious Creator, the Supreme Governor of the Universe, was pleased to call him into existence; that he might finally make him a partaker of a state of happiness, compared with which, the previous misery inflicted upon him for his own benefit and that of others, will be as nothing, but be swallowed up and lost in the

enjoyment of the glories of that heavenly kingdom, into which all shall have been admitted, and in which God will be all among all.

Is it to be wondered at, then, that we who entertain these views of the character and government of the Supreme Being, and of his gracious designs towards ourselves and our fellow men, should bind them to our hearts, and cherish them as heavenly treasures; that they should be present to us when we lie down, and when we rise up, sweetening the cup of life and filling our minds continually with the highest gratitude, veneration, and love, for him who hath promised to bestow such invaluable benefits upon us?

Now unto him the blessed and only potentate, the King of kings and Lord of lords, who only hath immortality, dwelling in light inaccessible, whom no man hath seen, or can see, to Him be honour and dominion for ever.

Having brought this long letter to a conclusion, I subscribe myself once more, sincerely wishing you every happiness,

My dear Sir,

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Yours most truly.

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